# PRIVATE EYE

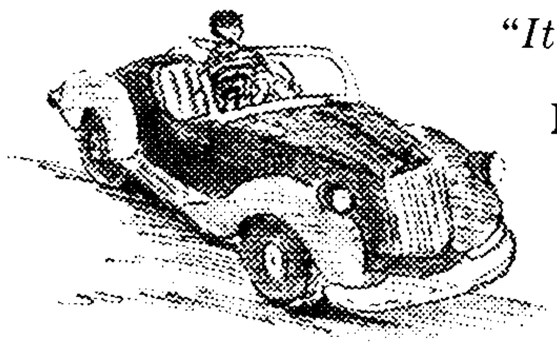
No. 804
Friday
9 Oct. '92

80p


# TORY CONFERENCE

# SHOW OF UNITY

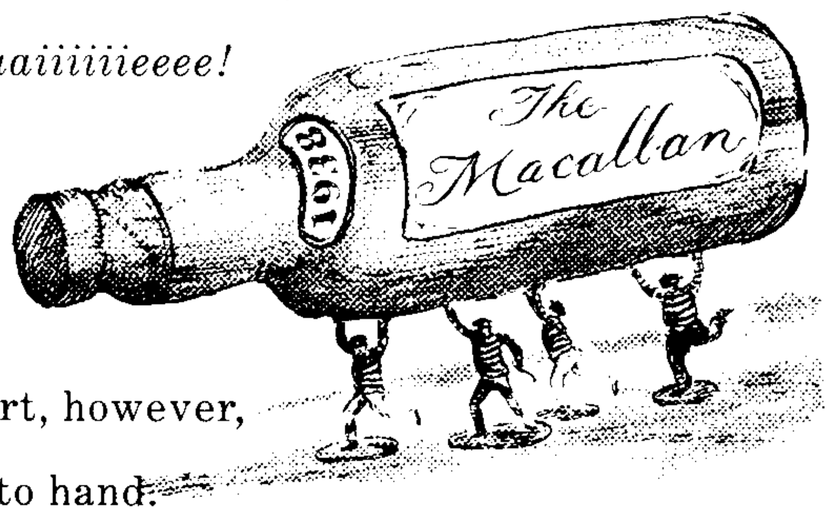
# Toy car thieves scarper with Macallan



*"It tore at my guts,"* said MR SPELLACY of Paisley, when thieves stole his priceless collection of miniature automobiles.

But even worse was the discovery that the felons had made off with a bottle of 1938 The Macallan Malt Whisky valued currently at well over £1,000.

*Aaaiiiiieeee!*




Comfort, however, was to hand.

A bottle of The Macallan 18 year old (purchased for £32 at the off-licence) with its golden treasury of sherry notes (acquired from ageing exclusively in oaken sherry butts) restored equanimity.

*"I just hope the '38 falls into the hands of a respectable collector,"* he said at last. *"But if I find they've drunk it, I'll give'em* BUTTS ~ *and it won't be sherry ones."*

The Macallan.
The Malt.

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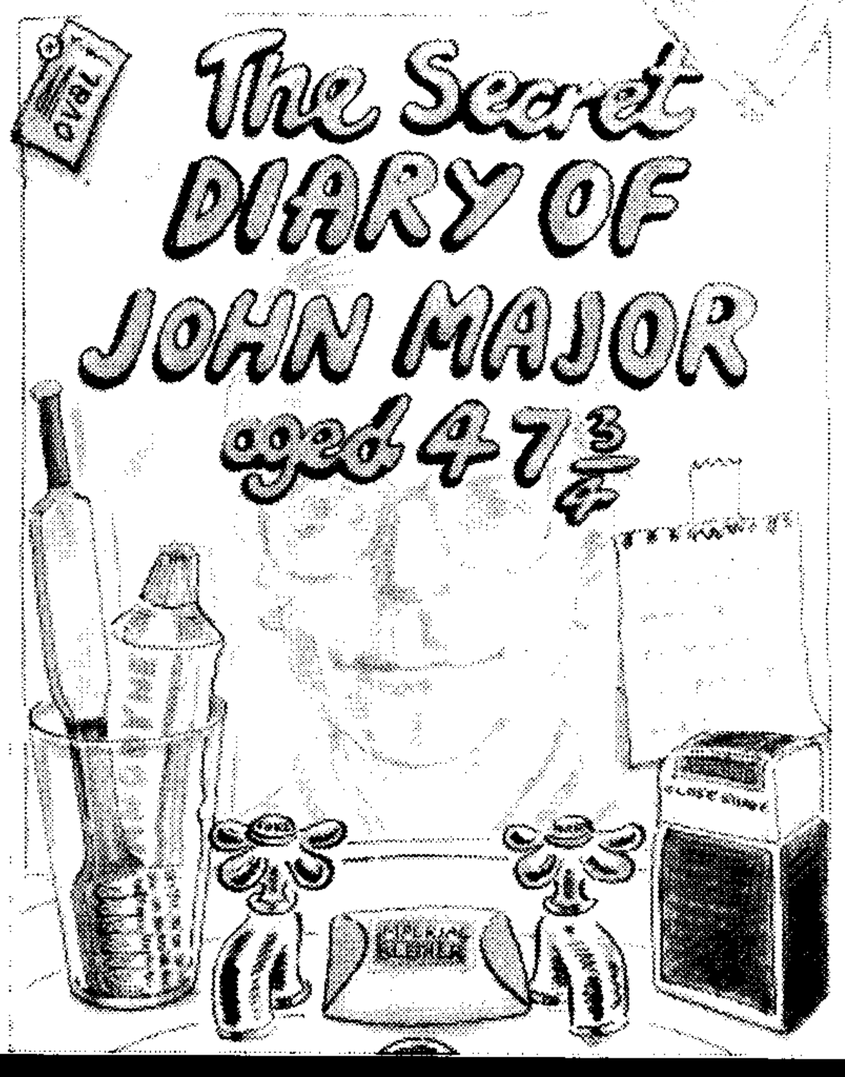
Virgin atlantic

**THE HOTTEST POLITICAL MEMOIRS OF THE YEAR. OH YES.**

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# Gnome

CRITICS of the Conservative Party Conference claim that so-called "Right-wing tub-thumpers" like myself are only interested in one "over-emotional" debate and that every year we table the same motion in order to satisfy the "blood-lust of the dimmer members of the Party".

It is easy to caricature those of us who have strong beliefs about punishment and discipline, but it is now clearer than ever that our views must prevail.

This nation needs a return to the old system, brutal as that may seem to the liberals and do-gooders who have infiltrated Tory ranks in recent years. Even they must concede that the recent string of horrific outrages cannot be allowed to go unpunished.

It may seem harsh, regressive, reactionary, even inhumane, but there is only one solution to the chaos that is afflicting this country and that is why our voices must ring out again:

Bring back Maggie! *(shurely 'hanging'? E.S.)*

E. Strobes
pp. Lord Gnome
c/o Stringemupfellows
St James
London


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# COLOUR SECTION

**WHOSE head will roll first: the chancellor Norman Lamont's — or that of Robin Leigh-Pemberton, his trusted governor of the Bank of England?**

With media attention focused almost entirely on the Government's economic and political difficulties, the impact of last week's Kerry report into the scandal at the Bank of Credit and Commerce International has not yet been fully absorbed.

The report, by a United States senate committee, roundly condemns both the Bank of England and Price Waterhouse over the numerous monstrous horrors perpetrated at BCCI. The Bank is even accused of shifting full responsibility for the fraudulent BCCI over to Abu Dhabi as soon as it realised the extent of the bankruptcy. Kerry's purple passage on Price Waterhouse will also embarrass the Conservative party's treasurer, Tim Smith, a parliamentary consultant to PW.

After Kerry, the half-censored report by our own Lord Justice Bingham may prove a little colourless. As the *Eye* has already reported, Bingham has been very lucky in some of the experience he has been able to draw on while compiling his report. The *Eye* mentioned Tim Hoult, one of the advisers, a Price Waterhouse partner who was at school at Sedbergh with Bingham. But that is not all.

Lord Justice Bingham was nominated for his job as head of the inquiry by the Board of Banking Supervision, one of whose members, Harry Taylor, was vice-chairman and chief executive of the Manufacturers Hanover Bank, which in 1976 lent US$2.6 million to Jimmy Carter's friend Bert Lance so Lance could buy stock in his own National Bank of Georgia.

At the time Lance had financial worries that threatened his respectability when Carter made him director of the Office of Management and Budget. Lance was an early business associate and important contact of Agha Hassan Abedi, founder of BCCI. When he left MHB, Taylor joined the Republican Bank of New York, taking with him from MHB a trusted lieutenant called Trevor Robinson. Robinson served as managing director of the Republic Bank's city branch until he was appointed as an assessor to the Bingham inquiry.

Meanwhile, anyone wanting to locate the important files the Kerry committee says have been kept secret by the Bank of England should apply to Stella Rimington, head of MI5.

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**IF THE Government ever does want to sort out the tangled mess of arms exports to Iraq when those exports were officially embargoed, it could do worse than visit the offices of Redcliffe International (Shipping) Ltd, at Bramble Way, Somercotes, in Derbyshire.**

In the 12 years since one John Apted was influential at the former government-owned agency for arms sales, IMS, Redcliffe International has been the sole shipping agent for arms exports from Britain to the Middle East. These exports included the enormous quantity of 155mm ammunition which was shipped to Yambo in Saudi Arabia, picked up there by Iraqi army trucks and trundled back to Baghdad.

The shipping subsidiary of Redcliffe was a split-off from the main company, which operated a refrigerator business from Sutton-in-Ashfield, Nottinghamshire. The men in charge of the breakaway were a former petty officer called John Friswell and his partner Ken Atkinson. These two are still engaged in shipping arms to the Middle East. Their main business at the moment is in shipping Paveway missiles for Abu Dhabi, where the sheikh is best known for his close connections with David Mellor and with the bankrupt, fraud-riddled bank BCCI.

In the months running up to the Gulf war, Redcliffe became worried about shipping arms to Iraq. Indeed, the company felt bound to turn down the last of a huge shipment of six containers of artillery fuses. The sixth container was duly shipped by a transport firm run by Bournemouth shipping magnate Colin Phillips.

Phillips was tracked down by a crack team from HM Customs, headed by Derek Du Berry. Thousands of hours of customs investigation ended in damp anticlimax at Reading crown court where the arms contractors and Mr Phillips were defendants. As the *Eye* reported, as soon as the defendants gave notice that they intended to call in their defence senior officials in the ministry of defence and even MI5, a deal was stitched up. Pleas of guilty were accepted and the defendants got away with small fines and suspended sentences. Mr Phillips, who drove cheerfully to the trial in his Mercedes, was fined.

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**THE British Airways Pensioners Association is making little headway in its complaints about the management of the pension scheme and its cavalier use of the surplus in the fund without discussions with the pensioners.**

BAPA is concerned about consultation. It didn't object, as it should have done, when British Airways announced that it was going to stop paying contributions into the scheme in 1989. What infuriated the pensioners was that the decision was taken without even a prior whisper to them.

The huge BA scheme is run by trustees — not one of whom is a direct representative of the pensioners. When the pensioners raised this awkward matter, the chairman of the trustees, Derek Stevens — who happens to be chief financial officer for British Airways — told them there was no way in law trust deeds could be changed to have a pensioner as a trustee.

Frustrated by years of trying to negotiate anything directly with British Airways, BAPA has gone to what it calls "a third party": the Commons select committee on social security. The committee, apart from one glamorous moment *not* interviewing the Maxwell brothers on television, and a pathetic report on the Maxwell business, has done (and intends to do) absolutely nothing to force directors and top management out of the trusteeships of pension funds — at British Airways or anywhere else.

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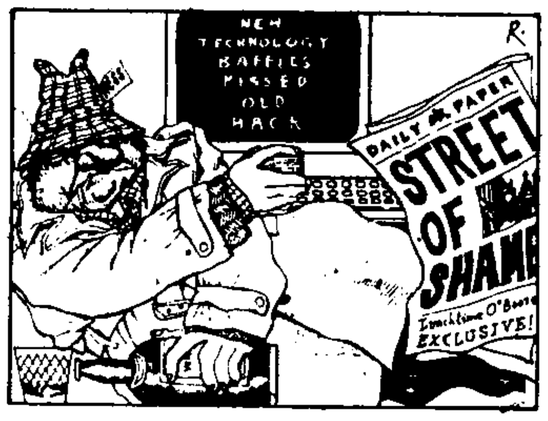
*"Not you again, Mr Major"*




**IN THE Murdoch company newspaper last week, new *Times* editor Peter Stothard said he didn't anticipate any dramatic changes in staffing at the paper. By Friday afternoon he had fired more than 20 hacks — the biggest mass sacking ever on a serious British newspaper.**

To be precise, Stothers got his luckless managing editor Peter Roberts to do the firing: the editor himself was apparently unable to face the victims.

The sackings were apparently indiscriminate. Roberts told the victims they were not being chosen because of incompetence, or age — or anything, really. "You just don't fit in with the editor's plans," he explained lamely.

The cost of pay-offs to the departing hacks will be well over £1 million — money the debt-laden Murdoch empire can ill afford. This seems rather a lot to pay to make room for Stothard's first new appointment: Nicholas Wapshott, the recently sacked political editor of the *Observer*, whose prose style once attracted the comment: "He writes like a hairdresser."

In a previous life Stothers and Wappers were colleagues at the *Times* in the features department under Dame Harold Evans. Wappers's important new job will be to edit the paper's Saturday comic supplement.

**THE *Sunday Times*'s glowing obituary of Tony Terry, its longest serving "foreign correspondent" who died aged 79 in Wellington, New Zealand, last week, did not fill in all the details.**

Terry may have been invaluable to the *Sunday Times*, but he was also pretty useful to MI6. Major *Sunday Times* investigations were routed through Terry in Wellington. He would report back to London after making worldwide inquiries on behalf of his nominal employers.

When the Mordecai Vanunu story was handed to the *Sunday Times*, a full brief was sent to Terry in order to get him to check with the Australian security intelligence organisation about Vanunu's Australian activities.

Terry naturally told the Aussies that Vanunu was trying to peddle Israeli nuclear secrets. The Aussies tipped off the British, who promptly tipped off the Israelis about Vanunu's plans. Vanunu was tagged immediately on arriving at Heathrow, not because of clever intelligence work by the Israelis but due to the stupidity of the *Sunday Times*.

Three years ago Terry was exposed by a left-wing magazine in New Zealand as a spy. He issued a threatening letter, with similar threats from the *Sunday Times*, but no apology was offered. Terry and the *Sunset Times* wisely decided not to proceed.

**EMPLOYEES of Rupert Murdoch are spitting with indignation at the latest annual report and accounts from News International.**

For the past two years, as part of the company's multi-billion pound debt rescheduling, the galley-slaves at Wapping have been continually exhorted by the Digger and his executives to tighten their belts. There have been redundancies; cuts in budgets; and a wage-freeze. News stories and editorials in all five titles produced at Wapping have taken up the theme, castigating bosses of other public companies (such as British Telecom) who take huge salary rises while their staff face pay-cuts or the sack.

Imagine, then, the Wapping hacks' surprise on turning to the newly published annual report to read that the directors of News international plc had awarded themselves an increase of 35 per cent by way of "salaries as executives", plus a similar increase in "other emoluments" (pension contributions etc).

The only director who seems to be setting an example is executive chairman Andrew Knight, whose salary rose by just £1,000 to £235,000 last year. But this is not the whole story: for Knight is also receiving "benefits" of A$18.57 million — which is rather more than £7 million.

And what is the reward for all the remaining staff at Wapping? A none-too-whopping 5 per cent pay increase, payable from 1 July 1992. It remains to be seen how much the directors will be paying themselves for the coming year. But it is a safe bet that their average rise will be rather more lavish than that.

**THE *Observer* threw a party last Friday night to celebrate the £2 million relaunch of its colour supplement under absurd, portly new editor Simon Kelner.**

He kitted himself out in a "dead trendy" linen suit for the occasion and promised "celebrity guests" in the form of Gary Lineker and George Best. Alas, neither turned up.

A dreadful hush fell over the proceedings as early copies of the magazine arrived and horrified staff tried to think of anything polite to say about the horrendous, migraine-inducing, day-glo mess Kelner had produced.

Some resentful souls wondered how a newspaper which pleaded penury when making hacks redundant only a few weeks ago could now afford to spend thousands of pounds on drivelling articles by Hunter S. Thompson, and even more absurd sums on serial rights to Madonna's new book of smutty photos (for which no one else was bidding anyway). And what about the huge fee to Martin Amis, who was flown over by Concorde to interview la Madonna?

No such doubts troubled the newspaper's small but perfectly formed editor, Donald "Busy" Trelford, who boogied the night away with a succession of comely young beauties from the advertising department. His favoured dance style was a curious, Charleston-like jig in which he kicked up his heels behind his back and ran his hands over them, as if checking that he hadn't stepped in dog-shit. One senior executive christened it "Dirty Don's Dog-Dirt Dance".

● The *Observer*'s crazy largesse was also seen when it outbid broadsheet rivals for serialisation rights to the Larkin letters. The *Indescribablyboring* bid £3,500, while the *Grauniad* managed an extra thousand or so. This left the *Observer*'s absurd £30,000 way ahead of the field.

## HOW THEY ARE RELATED

**READERS of the *Daily Telegraph* may have been puzzled in recent weeks by the amateurish, unfunny daubs that have appeared on the leader page in the slot usually occupied by Nicholas Garland's cartoons while Garland was on holiday. Who is this hitherto unheard-of cartoonist, who signs himself simply "Alexander"? And how on earth did he get the job?**

His full name is Alexander Garland. He is Nicholas Garland's son.

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**THE *Hampstead and Highgate Express*, which boasts loudly of its record in sniffing out corruption and nepotism in Camden and Haringey councils, has just hired a new deputy editor, 30-year-old Andrew Gibbs.**

This is a curious appointment. The paper already has two deputy editors, both of whom — unlike young Gibbs — are hugely experienced. There is no obvious role for the new boy: since his arrival in early September his main contributions have been a puff piece for a local estate agent and a day or two's work compiling the TV listings. Nor does he seem to have much knowledge of either Hampstead or Highgate: he commutes every day from distant Milton Keynes.

Odder still, *Ham & High* editor Gerald Isaaman has for months imposed a total freeze on new recruitment; indeed, not so long ago two hacks were made redundant "because of the recession". So who is this Andrew Gibbs?

He is the son of William Gibbs, chairman of Home Counties Newspapers — which, funnily enough, owns the *Hampstead and Highgate Express*.

**THE *Observer* recently carried yet another profile of Jeremy Isaacs, the Royal Opera House supremo, suggesting that he would ultimately win through and confound the critics of his administration — a line that goes against prevailing wisdom.**

**FACT:** Gillian Widdecombe, the *Observer*'s arts editor, is also known as Mrs Jeremy Isaacs.

**GORGEOUS, pouting Robert McCrum, supposedly in charge of publisher Faber & Faber, seems to spend much of his time writing newspaper articles from far-flung parts.**

For example, he had a full-page feature in last Thursday's *Guardian* about the new regime at the *New Yorker*, in which he praised Tina Brown and predicted she would make a great success of the mag.

Strangely McCrum forgot to mention one fact: that he himself was recently signed up by Tina Brown to write for the *New Yorker*.

It was interesting to see the *New Yorker* under the new regime of Tina Brown. How fitting that a story about Brett Kimberlin, imprisoned for suggesting that dyslexic Dan Quayle inhaled marijuana, which the last *Eye* covered in some 100 words, should be followed a week later by 33 *pages* in the *New Yorker*.

Headed *A Reporter at Large*, I gather Tina will be renaming the section *A Reporter at Length*.

**ONLY six weeks behind the *Eye*, the *Grauniad* has discovered that the plan to build an underground waste repository under Sellafield is to be "shelved".**

It also reported on 28 September that NIREX, the Nuclear industry radioactive waste executive, is to go for a "rock laboratory" instead.

We said on 14 August (See HOLE WITH A MINT IN IT) that NIREX, "realising that it will never win permission to build an underground dump" will go for a rock laboratory and that "whatever the propaganda may suggest" it will be a huge underground cavern designed to develop into the dump itself.

Blackadder

**THE Labour Party's current addiction to Europe looks like proving suicidal.**

By refusing to support demands for a UK referendum on the Maastricht treaty, while at the same time looking forward to a return to the shackles of the exchange rate mechanism and a "reformed" Maastricht, Labour has finally lost its chance to bring down John Major, if not the Conservative Government.

Until last week's Blackpool triumph of Labour's Eurofanatics, there was a distinct possibility that enough Tories would combine with Labour against the prime minister's polices to *make his* position untenable. But not any more.

So who has done most to get Labour impaled on the Euro hook? Step forward backroom adviser Gavyn Davies of merchant bankers Goldman Sachs, and academic Lord John Eatwell, ennobled for his success in converting Neil Kinnock to the European orthodoxy. Davies, who has made more than enough money in the City, has yet to win his peerage.

**DAVID MELLOR, always touted as being terribly clever, was actually being rather dim when he asked the fateful question: "Who chooses the cabinet — John Major or the tabloid editors?" As everyone now knows, the correct answer is Sir Marcus Fox, chairman of the Tory backbenchers.**

However, Fox cannot have enjoyed giving "John Thomas" his enforced leave from the cabinet, for Mellor was the great white hope of Westminster Communications, the PR firm of which Fox is a long-standing director and shareholder.

Football fan Mellor was expected to take a sympathetic view of the plight of Westminster's most important clients — the football pools promoters — whose future takings are severely threatened by the Government's plans for a national lottery. His successor, the comparatively austere Peter Brooke, will be much harder to impress.

**DESPITE the stupor among delegates to the Labour conference at Blackpool last week, ripples of excitement were generated by a fierce attack on the party leadership and an exposé of its financial crisis in a new magazine called** *Casablanca* (*What that? Ed.*)

The gruesome mag, pretentiously styling itself "graffiti on the hoardings that surround the ruins of the welfare state", alleged that Labour's £2m-plus debt was the result — wait for it — of poor financial planning. More interestingly, it also blamed excessive spending on unsaleable Kinnock memorabilia, including a "victory" mug showing his face superimposed on a union jack, thousands of which had to be secretly destroyed after the election.

The article also revealed that the party's new centralised membership system was a total disaster — something the Walworth Road *apparatchiks* have concealed for more than a year. The renewals and applications backlog is now more than 50,000, and the computerised list of names and addresses in such a mess no one knows how serious the decline in membership is.

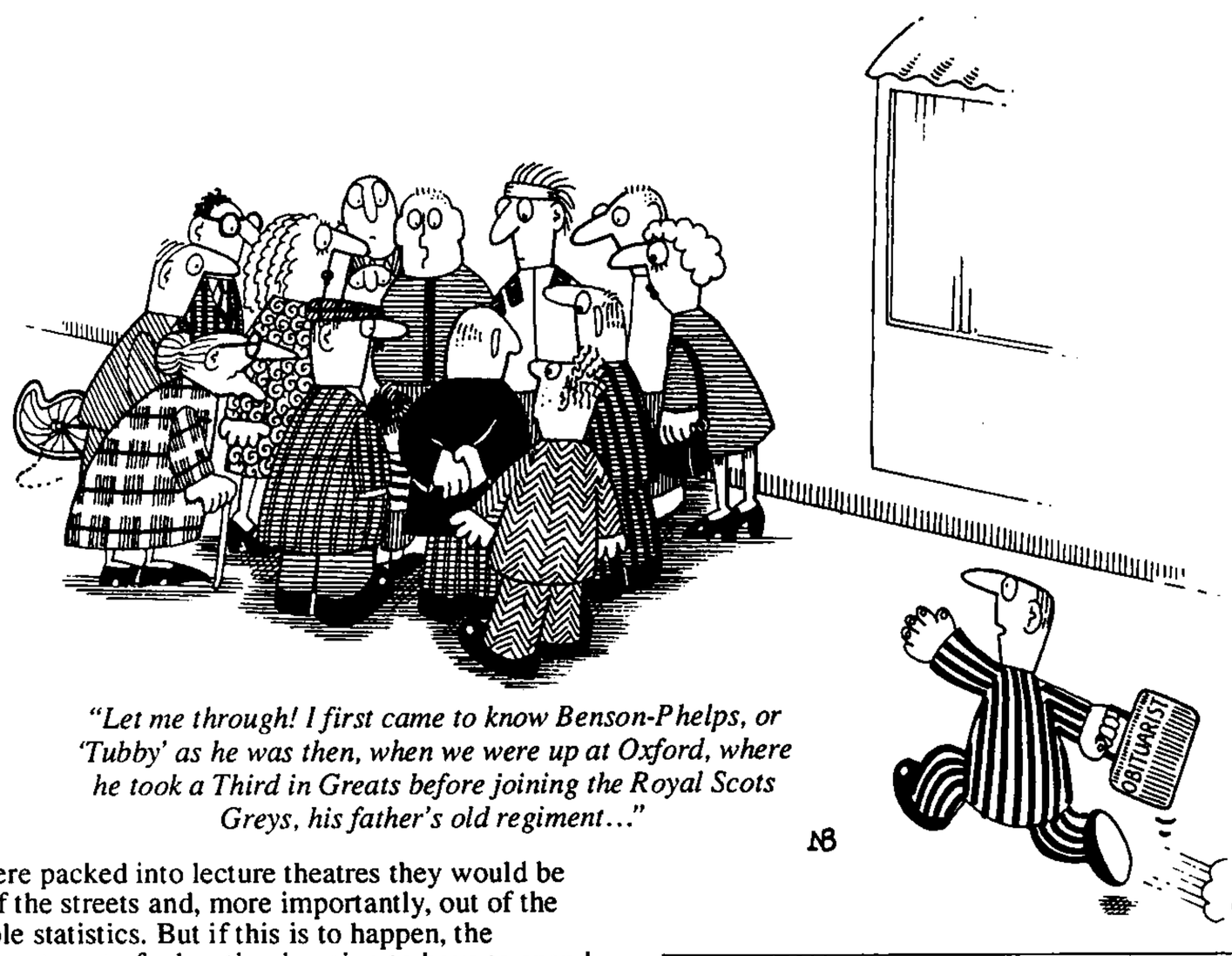
Wally Road staff — already disillusioned by the massive redundancies the financial crisis will undoubtedly occasion — are scared to visit local party branches because of the unanswerable questions about the new system that always arise. "We're just sitting around waiting to get sacked," one insider told the *Eye*. Sounds like Labour runs its party in the same way the Tories run the country...

**THE Government's wheeze for reducing the numbers of young unemployed — sending them all to university — is going to cost money, rather than save it.**

The thinking was that if the nation's youth were packed into lecture theatres they would be off the streets and, more importantly, out of the dole statistics. But if this is to happen, the department of education is going to have to spend a lot of money ensuring that university and college buildings conform with safety legislation and do not breach fire brigade regulations covering the numbers of people allowed in such places.

First to feel the pinch is London university, which has had to relocate several facilities and courses. Many others will follow as local fire chiefs set safety limits in individual cases.

There are similar implications for school head teachers, who are constantly being pressurised to take extra pupils. If they find they need an official excuse for not taking anyone else, they could always call in the fire inspector.




*"Let me through! I first came to know Benson-Phelps, or 'Tubby' as he was then, when we were up at Oxford, where he took a Third in Greats before joining the Royal Scots Greys, his father's old regiment..."*

**ONE man whose name will feature prominently in legal proceedings initiated by socialist millionaire Owen Oyston against various Lancashire Tories and one sitting MP (see *Eyes passim*) is private detective Christopher Moore.**

Moore, formerly with the Inland Revenue, runs Commercial Insurance and Legal Services Ltd from Compstall, near Stockport. It was to Moore that Michael Murrin turned for help with part of his campaign to "investigate" Oyston, a campaign funded secretly by local Tory William Harrison.

The "investigation" undertaken by Moore proved something of a goldmine for him: he was paid by both Harrison and Murrin. But in 1986 Harrison became upset with Moore when he found that after a vast injection of cash he was seeing little return. In a tape recorded call to Murrin, Harrison complains that Moore kept saying reports would be due but they were never delivered and that he had paid "thousand, tens, upwards of £20,000" to Moore.

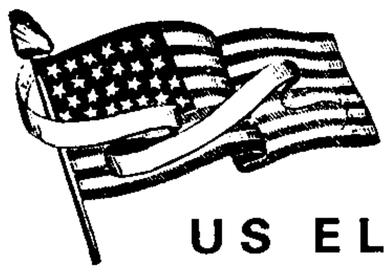
Matters between Moore and Harrison deteriorated so that by the middle of 1986 Moore was threatened by solicitors acting for Harrison and armed with a vicious Anton Pillar court order, which allows a plaintiff to seize documents.

Murrin, caught in the middle, managed to broker a settlement between the parties: in August 1986 Moore agreed to update his files and Harrison agreed not to enforce the Anton Pillar order. In November 1986 Harrison wrote to Moore, through his solicitors, finally calling off the investigation which by then had cost him nearly £30,000.

But Moore is a resourceful man. Seeing his chance, he then arranged to meet with Oyston. For a fee not a million miles from £100,000, Moore offered to tell all to Oyston about the plot to discredit him. The meeting took place at the Red Rose radio station in Preston. Oyston declined to pay.

Then along came the *Sunday Times*, which had libelled Oyston in an article in 1989 and needed to dig further "dirt" to try to mount a creditable defence. Murrin, who was unaware that Moore had offered to grass him up to Oyston, recommended to Biddle & Co, the *Sunday Times*'s lawyers, that they should hire Moore. This they did, according to Murrin, at £1,000 a day. By all accounts this was excessive in view of the results: zilch.

*'Backbiter'*



## US ELECTION NEWS

**LAME-DUCK presidential hopefuls George Bush and Dan Quayle are so desperate for help that their campaign team has even received advice from Mark Fulbrook and Sir John Lacy, present and past heads of Conservative electoral campaigning in this country.**

Early last month the pair were in Washington to give a pep talk to the Bush/Quayle campaign team on how to win the election. They recommended the Republicans follow the Tory example: ignore the actual disastrous economic record of the incumbent administration and instead knock the opposition's prospects for getting out of the hole.

If Bush follows Major's example and wins, presumably now would be a very good time for Americans to exchange their dollars for Deutschmarks.

**IN OUR coverage of the US presidential campaign, the *Eye* may have given the impression that Bill Clinton, the Democratic candidate, is entirely in the hands of the pro-Israeli lobby which has staffed and financed his campaign to such a large extent.**

This is not strictly true. In fact Slick Willie is only 90 percent owned by the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (Aipac), having sold at least a 10 percent stake in himself to the notoriously reactionary Cuban-American lobby.

The Cuban American Foundation, which has connections with some very jolly right-wing terrorist groups in Latin America, recently organised a $125,000 fundraising dinner for Clinton. At the end, the great white liberal hope endorsed plans for legislation which would tighten the embargo on Cuba and try to enforce it on American subsidiaries in Britain and Europe.

**Mr Perot would not reveal details of his campaign strategy, "but it's going to be serious, you can bet on it, and concentrated on the issues." His senior adviser, Orson Swindle, said that Mr Perot had prepared a national media blitz and was prepared to spend "tens of millions of dollars to ensure that his message is heard."**

*Grauniad*

# Grovel

● *MY NOTORIOUSLY litigious chum Duncan "Dunky" Campbell, chairman of the board at the New Statesman, has been getting a taste of his own medicine. In the past fortnight he has twice appeared in court as a defendant — and both times he lost.*

*First there was an unfair dismissal suit brought by two women who, as a cost-cutting measure, had been sacked from the Staggers without proper compensation. (One of them had been fired while on maternity leave. Very socialist.)*

*Dunky himself represented the Statesman in court, presumably hoping to repeat the Perry Mason act he had performed in his recent libel suit against The Pink Paper. This time, however, it was less successful. Judge Anthony Thompson rejected Dunky's claim that the two women's contracts of employment had not been "legally binding" and ordered the magazine to cough up.*

*Afterwards Campbell complained that the magazine now faced costs of between £15,000 and £20,000. "We will either have to make other people redundant or close down," he wailed. "We can't afford it." Ah, but he can: for £20,000 is precisely the sum Dunky won from the Pink Paper earlier this year.*

*Meanwhile there was that other little brush with the law. As we recently revealed, after a disturbance in Stoke Newington the police arrested Dunky and, when they heard his name, threw him in the slammer overnight because they thought he was the other Duncan Campbell, the Grauniad one who had been writing about corruption at Stoke Newington nick.*

*Dunky wrote a self-pitying feature about this in the Independent on Sunday two weeks ago. What he glossed over, however, was that the fracas which led to his original arrest had resulted in Dunky being convicted and bound over to keep the peace.*

TO BLACKPOOL, where the British Airways reception is just one disappointment among many at Labour's party conference.

Not only is BA's usual sumptuous buffet missing, but so is the company's genial chairman, Lord King.

I gather the airline supremo and Tory party bankroller is in Tokyo on a freebie jaunt (*Shurely "at an important overseas board meeting"? Ed.*) and wonder who could be responsible for such an unfortunate diary clash.

Step forward Gail Redwood, British Airways company secretary and, er, wife of the Tory MP John Redwood.

# Pseuds Corner

**Thus, while it is possible to trace a direct line of descent from the style guru who first decided that cropped hair was fashionable again, to the slightly belated crop of George Michael, and, at the bottom of the fashion chain, to that of Gazza, the crop draws upon a reservoir of resonances that cannot be explained away as fashionable weak-mindedness.**

**TOM SHONE**
**Sunday Times**

"Radical interpretability" is the vogue term for this. And it is fun. Take Melanie Morton's deconstructionist analysis of the song "Express Yourself". Apparently, Madonna subverts the domination of patriarchal, racist and capitalist constructions simply by the way she roars "self" in the phrase "express yourself".

In her paper from the University of Minnesota, friskily titled: "Don't go for Second Sex, Baby", Ms Morton writes: "The word 'self' clues us in on some of these meditations on the constitution of a de-centred subjectivity. 'Self' is first sung on G, then on F sharp, moving to F natural, then on G, moving back to F sharp and lastly 'self' is sung on F sharp to F. The word as well as the concept gets divided and put in motion, articulating agency through positions which remain partial and temporary."

**The Times**

**The delicate mythological landscape was a gift from another friend, Prince Enrico d'Assia. I think you paint so much better if you have a title. I got mine in 1989. It's highly satisfying and very comforting. When things go wrong, you can say, "Oh well, I'll go and live in an old folk's home, but I'll still be a Sir.' It's particularly nice when you don't come from anywhere grand: my father worked for London County Council and I was brought up in Wembley.**

**SIR HARDY AMIES**
**Telegraph Magazine**

The urgent crypto-erotic sensation of release, the potent surge through the lower middle swamps of the body, the reliable comfort of this daily draining process, the surge and splash of the little waterfall, kinetic art on tap, the guaranteed pleasure of that post-urinal moment, sans tristesse, even the obstinate tricks of the final dribbles; and the afterglow...

**MELVYN BRAGG**
**Crystal Rooms**

*The refashioned Green Party can no longer afford to flirt with the fickle media and massage the middle-class consumer. Our supporters are those who see the need for change. Our task is to subvert the dominant paradigm.*

**TERRI ENYON**
**(Treasurer, West Midlands Area Green Party)**
**Independent**

All of the artists selected for BARCELONA *ABROAD* have an openness built into their work. It is always a negotiation of the metaphorical, but not a specification of that metaphor. The work occupies a particular space, and no space at all. Its point of origin is clear and specific, but that point of origin is, in more sense than one, a point of departure. It is always crossing over, from one place to another, and is, at each crossing, placing and displacing, susceptible to change and influence as it temporarily settles.

**Barcelona *Abroad* leaflet**
**European Visual Arts Centre**

*CONTRIBUTORS: Mick Humphries, Scott Fuller, Katie Wales, Ann Turton, Mark Salter, I.R. Lockett.*

**£10 paid for entries**

● *AS I SLIDE into old age, dribbling uncontrollably on to my copy of The Oldie magazine, I am heartened by the actions of another greybeard — Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the OAP who runs the United Nations.*

*Boo Boo, as his nurses call him, spoke eloquently on the recent International Day of the Elderly. "The ageing of populations offers new opportunities and new challenges," he declaimed, adding mysteriously that its blessings include "that years have been added to life".*

*How true! If rumours are to be believed, Boo Boo got his job as head of the UN by subtracting four from 74 to achieve a more career-positive professional age of 70. (More menial UN staff have to pick up their pensions at 60.)*

*Either it was a very spry move — or the poor bugger's memory has packed in.*

*"I don't know about films, but I can get Michael Winner's part in you"*

TO THE DORCHESTER and the Writers' Guild awards, where I am less than impressed by the behaviour of voluble Scouse scribe Alan Bleasdale.

Bleasdale first accompanies Victoria Wood on to the rostrum when they collect the award for best light entertainment programme for writing Julie Walters's show, but he ungraciously uses the opportunity to attack the guild.

"Amazing. Last year I was up for 10 and a half hours of drama and didn't win," he announces modestly. "This year I've won with a seven-minute sketch."

But that is not the end of it.

Later he leaps on stage again to defend an alcoholically-challenged John Osborne, who has attracted the ire of the audience. "You bastards don't know good art when it stares you in the face!" Bleasdale yells at the crowd.

Well, I *presume* he is defending Osborne. It would be terribly sad if the outburst is prompted by bitterness at the guild's previous snub to his own work.

I SPLASH out on some light bedtime reading: £65 for the splendid new *Coopers & Lybrand Manual of Auditing*, fifth edition, complete with a glowing personal recommendation from none other than Sir Ron Dearing, chairman of the Financial Reporting Council.

"I warmly welcome this publication," writes the daft old trout, "...as a statement of current best practice and as a contribution to high standards of auditing."

As readers well know, Coopers & Liebrand were regular auditors for dear departed Cap'n Bob. If they really are paragons of "current best practice" as Sir Ron opines, God save us from the rest of the auditing mob.

**Pip Pip!**

# NOOKS and CORNERS

**HOW HARD it is to recognise the inevitability of ageing in a society ruled by the Cult of Youth and a culture that cannot cope with decay and is terrified of death (yes, Piloti's own concrete is beginning to crack and my reinforcements are rusting).**

So we pack off the old, out of mind and out of sight, into dreadful organised clinical "homes" where individuals are robbed of dignity. But it was not always so. Of all historic building types that ornament and enrich towns and villages, one of the most *necessary*, as well as beautiful, are those communal structures known as almshouses.

In these carefully designed groups of accommodation, the old can live independent and dignified lives. Almshouses range from the civilised splendour of the Chelsea Hospital to little terraces of cottages found in country villages. Where better to end up while you can still use your pins? Yet, inevitably, in recent years many almshouses have been closed (and the sites profitably redeveloped), usually on the ground that the accommodation is substandard. But who wants modern plumbing in a horrid "old people's home" miles out of town if you can still have your own front door in the centre of things?

Which brings me to the case of the Hungerford Almshouses and School in Corsham, Wiltshire. Endowed by Dame Margaret Hungerford and built in 1668, they are a charming group of traditional stone gabled buildings with baroque flourishes, listed Grade I. The tourist leaflet about Corsham notes that the six almshouses "have been in continuous use, virtually unaltered, ever since". Unfortunately this is no longer true and may become even less true. Only two elderly ladies now live in the

almshouses, while four are empty and increasingly derelict. Indeed, all the almshouses are in poor condition with holes in the stone roof.

Why? The neglectful trustees of the charity claim, preposterously — when we have an ageing population and more and more people who might like to live in charming old almshouses — that the demand for accommodation has declined. But worse, in fact, is the news that the trustees have decided that something must be done.

A belated Thatcherite broom is to sweep through Corsham. Why run almshouses if money can be made? The trustees now have a new clerk. He is an accountant, Mr J. Lock, who is also treasurer of the Corsham Club. As such, he comes into frequent contact with Lord Methuen, patron of the trust, who, unlike his admirable architect father, the 5th baron, is respected in the village for his ability to make national headlines like PISSED PEER or BOOZED BARON.

So between them the clerk and the baron have hatched a scheme to modernise the Hungerford almshouses. Steps are being taken to evict the tenants of the former Warden's House; land has been sold off and it is now proposed to make a large car park behind the buildings. Few almshouse dwellers drive, of course, but so what? A deal has been done with North Wiltshire district council to get money so the revamped building can be used as council flats — thus betraying Dame Margaret Hungerford's original bequest.

Poor old Oswald Brakspear, architect to the trust, has been sacked. He had prepared a scheme to improve the six almshouses, but that is not what is now required. Instead, a Bristol architect called Philips proposes to convert the six and the old Warden's House into a dozen flats. This means organising the interior horizontally instead of vertically and will involve removing internal walls, ripping out original panelling and doors and generally destroying authentic 17th century interiors. And this in spite of a report by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England that: "The vertical integrity of each unit should be retained. The survival of the almshouses and school room in their present state... make them both rare and extremely important."

This scheme is so monstrous, on social as well as historical and architectural grounds, that I would like to think it cannot happen. But the planning authority is, of course, North Wiltshire district council. I hope both English Heritage and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings will have something to say.

***I LEARN more of "Fatlips" Minto, the aristocratic destroyer of his own family seat (Eye 803).***

***After the school in Minto House closed in 1966, Lord Melgund (as he then was) bought the house in 1972, outbidding Mr Robin Jell, pioneer of country house restorations in Scotland, who intended to restore it.***

***The moment Melgund bought it, he applied for listed building consent to demolish. In the event, in 1973, he took the roof off. Strange that Lord Minto now claims, in the pages of The Scotsman, "I would have welcomed restoration." Fatlips has now applied to pliant Borders regional council for listed building consent to demolish what remains of Minto House. If he obtains this it will be a scandal — undermining the status of every historic building in Scotland and Britain as well as being a direct challenge to the secretary of state for Scotland who spotlisted Minto House Grade A in August.***

'Piloti'

## POLICE 5

**THE crack-dealing protection scandal at north London's Stoke Newington "supernick" rumbles on, acquiring West Midlands serious crime squad-style proportions as Knacker's victims are gradually released on bail pending appeal.**

Knacker admits that eight plods have been transferred to other stations and three suspended as a result of the investigation into his own dodgy dealings. But Hackney Community Defence Association, a local watchdog, points out that at least 14 former members of Stoke Newington drugs squad no longer serve at the station, and it has speculated that the whole squad may have been quietly disbanded some time before Scotland Yard began its inquiry.

The *Eye* recently carried news of the release of Dennis Tulloch, one of those fitted up, and within a week Nigerian mother-of-two Ida Oderinde, was also freed. She now awaits her appeal at home. Serving a long sentence for supposedly dealing crack cocaine, she was the source of the detailed allegations that originally sparked Knacker's inquiry, ludicrously called Operation Jackpot.

Jackflop sources, who believe Ida to be innocent, say she was planted with drugs because she knew too much about bent local coppers. They also say that the leader of the Crackpot inquiry, Supt Ian "Jack" Russell, will present his report to the DPP within weeks. Russell and his six-strong team have taken hundreds of statements and catalogued allegations of corruption against more than a dozen plods from the station.

Deciding what to do with the report is going to be an enormous headache for the CPS, which has already had to abandon a number of trials because the integrity of police prosecution witnesses was in doubt. Meanwhile Knacker is bracing himself for another unwelcome splurge of media attention later this month when the trial of the mysterious Officer X — the copper at the heart of the scandal — begins.

## ART NEWS

**WHAT COULD be more admirable than the National Art Collections Fund? It gives money to museums and galleries for purchases; it is supported by all sorts of worthy individuals, companies and foundations; and for a mere £15 a year, you too can belong.**

Or, as the fund's treasurer, Richard Hambro, cheerfully boasts: "You can still get annual membership and everything that goes with it for the price of a sandwich at the Ritz."

Before joining, however, it might be worth studying the small print of the fund's accounts. For the NACF spends a very high, indeed extravagant, proportion of its income on running itself -money which could otherwise be given to museums and galleries to acquire antiques and works of art.

An attempt was made at the last AGM to point this out, but the speaker was loftily brushed aside.

The latest annual report makes the fund's priorities clear. Compared with the previous year, the number of staff rose from 18 to 22. Spending on administration was up from £306,180 to £417,987. Spending on salaries, pensions and national insurance was up from £268,911 to £342,325. Spending on publications was up from £97,319 to £178,125.

However, grants to galleries and museums actually fell, from £1,483,397 to £1,338,244. In other words, the amount spent on buying art — the fund's *raison d'etre* — is not very much greater than the £958,860 spent on administration. And this is in spite of the fact that the fund enjoys the use of rent-free offices from the Government.

Richard Hambro explains the fall in grants and rise in admin costs by saying that membership has risen from 30,000 to 35,000, "which means our publication and postage costs have gone up". But by a total of £111,807 in one year?

# ME TV

**Eldorado (BBC1)**

**The Big Breakfast (C4)**

**PART of the infamous Santa Fe manifesto — in which BBC director-general designate John Birt was doorstepped on holiday in New Mexico by the *Sunday Times* and asked about his plans for the corporation — was the suggestion that *Eldorado* would be scrapped.**

This rumour was subsequently played down, and there is a case for arguing that the BBC cannot suddenly drop *Eldorado* for the same reason George Bush could not, whatever pundits suggested, suddenly drop Dan Quayle: to do so would be such a catastrophic admission of error of judgement as to undermine the whole institution.

It should also be said, to whatever credit can be mustered for *Eldorado*, that the first great ratings crisis surrounding the soap opera — when audiences slipped to less than two million shortly after transmission began — was statistically bogus. The show opened against the Olympics, during which BBC2 was sometimes scoring ratings of around 10 million. If you believed *Eldorado*'s figures were the true ones, you logically had also to accept that BBC2 would maintain its Olympic form.

Alan Yentob's channel couldn't — and didn't — and *Eldorado* now manages around 6.75 million, negligible in comparison with fellow soaps but not yet unequivocally ambulance figures. (Cynics might argue that the 6.75 million is artificially boosted by two million from the repeat showing, but think about this theory. Either that number of people are watching each episode twice — in which case there are some very dangerous types at loose in society — or the soap has established two separate audiences.)

Yet, despite such "green shoots" (© *Sunday Times*) of recovery, viewing of recent episodes suggests it would still be unwise for those involved with the programme to take out any big mortgages in the next few months.

Although an acting coach has reportedly been flown to Spain by producer Verity Lambert, *Eldorado* remains an almost comically low-performance vehicle. Bruce Forsyth's *Generation Game* finishes with a round in which the winners dress up and take part in a short sketch, with, perhaps, a wild west or outer space setting. Their dialogue was hung on sheets around the set. Whole stretches of *Eldorado* bring to mind these amusingly rough theatrics.

Lambert appeared to have faced this difficulty by removing — or reducing the visibility of — several of the less certain performers from the cast, including Kathy Pitkin as the runaway jailbait Fizz, Roger Walk as her sour-daddy husband Bunny and Patch Connolly as Snowy White, the boring Irish odd-job man. Yet, bizarrely, the series

then devoted most of last week's episodes to the departure of Fizz, thus calling for lengthy scenes between her, Bunny and his confidant Snowy. Pitkin so bizarrely stressed the line "He doesn't want to talk to me, me who's been up to all sorts..." that she sounded like a stroke victim trying to confess to a perversion involving liquorice sweets.

But all sorts of verbally stilted performances matter more in *Eldorado* than any other soap because so many of the other characters are speaking broken English anyway. This irritation has not been lessened by the recent thinning out of the cast. The show's politically correct but doomed experiment with the characters speaking unsubtitled in their own languages — a ratings-booster if ever you heard one — may have been abandoned, but this merely invites the celebrated Borgia Syndrome in which the viewer loses the next five lines while working out the last one.

For example, in last Wednesday's episode Maria — bolshy Blair's forbidden Saville fruit — was given a line about the familial influence of her mother's mother. But the actress Maria Sanchez broke up the speech like poetry, so that she said something like: "In my house/ HOLD what my grand/ motherSAYSGOES." This objection is pragmatic, not parochial.

In the same way, the reports that the weaker performers are leaving the cast lead the viewer to premature celebrations, and resultant disappointment. How many must have cheered when a plot strand suggested that nerdish, pig-tailed Blair had drowned himself? But there he was in a subsequent scene, infuriatingly alive. Is his new promise to go back-packing round the world genuine or another plot-tease?

And, though Marcus (Jesse Birdsall) shows the potential to develop as an efficient villain, and good writers (Juliet Ace, Valerie Georgeson, Gilly Fraser) have lifted the qualities of the scripts, even the new emergency-government version of *Eldorado* looks dangerously uncertain of its tone. Current storylines — amateur theatricals, difficult teenagers — are alarmingly *Archer*-ish for a mass market television soap.

Equally unsure of its target audience — though still young and therefore more to be indulged at the moment — is that other £10 million gamble by a channel, Michael Grade's *The Big Breakfast Show*. Square Eyes' interim judgement is that Chris Evans, the spoiled DJ who co-hosts, is very funny but that his sod-this style, and the wildness and punning of the whole show, suggest the ingredients of a cult late Saturday night show rather than a daily early-morning advertising-spinner. The fear must be that the star-fucking side of Grade's nature — which led him into Bruce Forsyth's absurd *Big Night*, his career nadir — has led him to back Sir Bob Geldof and Paula Yates, the new morning show's producers, against commercial sense.

*'Square Eyes'*

# MEDIA NEWS

**BBC supremo John Birt is becoming intoxicated by the trappings of power.**

Not content with installing an *en suite* bathroom in his office, Birt now seems to consider it beneath his dignity to telephone anyone of lower rank than himself. If he wants to speak to a colleague — even one whose office is just down the corridor — he now sends a curt fax: "Please ring me. J."

Can it be long before BBC commissionaires are obliged to doff their caps whenever the great man walks past?

● Will someone please ring John Birt to tell him the truth about his Rolling News idea? Not only will it lose him all his influential listeners, angered about Radio 4 being on FM, but it will lose even those listeners who think they want more news.

Hard-pressed staff already refer to the project as Rolling Bollocks because they know there isn't enough news to fill the new airtime. They therefore have to spend *more* time filing longer and more frequent reports and *less* time gathering news. So in a predictable spiral even less news than ever fills even more time. But that's the BBC — the Brilliant Birt Concept.

**WHAT a small world it is in "social action" broadcasting. Both Carlton and Meridian, the new ITV contractors for London (weeekday) and the south, recently advertised widely for editors of their social action units. Many applied, many were interviewed.**

Strangely enough, at the end of this exhaustive trawl Mary McAnally, Meridian's head of regional features, appointed the oily Scot Gerry Melling to the post. Melling was previously her deputy and bag-carrier at Thames Television, having escaped from being a welfare worker in Glasgow in order to improve his own welfare.

Even more strange was that Colin Stanbridge, Carlton's Best-Dressed Man and controller of regional affairs, decided after a long and wide search that his old deputy from the BBC, Peter Lowe, was the ideal candidate to be Carlton's first social action editor. Perhaps his first series could include a programme on "How to get a job in television — the easy way".

**BBC1's new cop show, *Between the Lines*, recently included a scene in which a King's Cross prostitute was attending to a client in the back seat of a car.**

Strangely, the numberplate of the J-registered car ended with the three letters "DPP". Whatever can this mean?

**FROM time to time the *Independent* publishes articles which are of enormous value to the intelligence services. Such an article was** THE TRIAL OF JAN K **in the *Independent on Sunday* on 20 September.**

The author, Alex Kershaw, sought to rescue the somewhat bruised reputation of Jan Kavan, a Czech exile posing in Britain in the 1970s and early 80s as a dissident. Kavan has had a bad press recently. The files of Czech intelligence have been released to the public and they show Kavan, on video, drinking champagne in November 1989 with two top agents of the former Czech intelligence service, the hated StB.

Kavan has also been proved by the Broadcasting Complaints Commission to have told a pack of lies when he complained about a Thames Television programme in 1981. The commission upheld Kavan's complaint at the time but reversed its judgement this year when it realised Kavan had been lying.

Kershaw's article (with only passing and unconvincing references to the champagne-swilling and the Broadcasting Complaints Commission) seeks to prove that Kavan was never a spy for the Czechs. He is a little short on proof, but he does manage to quote from a book that hasn't yet been published.

Called *Little Sister*, it is apparently written by Vlastimil Ludwig, the head of the Czech intelligence from 1968 to 1988 who defected to Britain in 1988 and has been held under a false name and under close surveillance by MI6 ever since. How on earth did Mr Kershaw get hold of a book which has never been published and is allegedly written by a man closely guarded by MI6?

One man who might have an answer is the journalist and recent hagiographer of Rupert Murdoch, William Shawcross. He gets an interesting mention in Kershaw's article. Writing about the StB's "Kato file", Kershaw reveals: "The journalist William Shawcross, then with the *Sunday Times*, is mentioned in the file."

Very interesting. But why should he be there and how often does he appear? Kershaw does not tell us. The *Eye* can disclose that Shawcross is named at least 30 times in the file. Each time he is described as a "British intelligence officer". The file also suggests that Shawcross was operating as a British intelligence officer in the late 1960s when his career as a *Sunday Times* reporter was just beginning.

What can this mean? Isn't it time Shawcross explained these entries to the world (instead of bullying the *Observer* to name him only as "Mr X")? And shouldn't he or Kershaw say how the latter had such a pull with a man whose movements are known only to MI6 that he was able to quote from a book that has not yet been published?

Appearing on the *Late Show* recently, Shawcross said he thought Murdoch acted as a "kind of agent for private enterprise". But just what kind of agent is Murdoch's biographer?

## I-BSkyB

**Telly's Robert Kilroy-Silk is selling his £300,000 Spanish villa — just weeks after telling Hello! magazine: "We love it here."**

**Dish**

The couple, who also have a £1 million home in Buckinghamshire, have packed the villa with Spanish antiques and installed a Sky dish.

*The Sun*

*CONTRIBUTOR: Dave Ray.*

*An occasional column for which readers are invited to submit Sky-plugs masquerading as news items in Murdoch papers. The usual £10 will be paid.*

## JUST FANCY THAT

Another piece of instant wisdom which has staged a come-back over the past few days is that "you can't buck the markets." This was, and is, mere cant. A glance at any TV news programme will remind us what "the markets" are - not some untameable monster, just a mob of excitable young men in shirt-sleeves, out to turn a quick buck before they head for the wine bar.

*The Standard 17.9.92 p.10*

If history has any lessons, it is probably that sterling crises tend to occur when the market decides that the currency is overvalued. Mr Lamont says it has not been. The markets, which — as we now know — you can't buck, believe that it has been.

*The Standard 17.9.92 p.10*

## HACKWATCH No 31: Nigel Dempster

**IT WAS 19 years ago this week that Nigel Dempster's diary first appeared in the *Daily Mail*. On Monday the *Mail* celebrated the anniversary with an adulatory centre-page spread.**

"The other day," it began, "Nigel Dempster took a friend to lunch. To Harry's Bar in Mayfair. A place for 'people who matter'. And in the infuriating, fascinating world of British society, Nigel Dempster matters. This week Dempster begins his 20th year as Britain's supreme diarist, his 20th year of exposing 'charlatans and bounders' and pricking pomposity."

We, too, wish to honour the "doyen of Fleet Street diarists". Here, by way of a tribute, are the pomposity-pricking, charlatan-exposing highlights from just one crowded month in Dempster's Diary: September 1992.

**1 September:** "Beautiful Penny Cross is basking in the warmth of the Spanish weather, new love and motherhood — and has never been happier," Dempster reveals. Penny, who was once married to *Chariots of Fire* star Ben Cross, now lives with a Belgian businessman in Marbella, where they run a restaurant. "I wake up every morning in this beautiful place, no stress, the weather is marvellous, not many people... I absolutely adore it here," she confesses.

**2 September:** The Yorks' former nanny Alison Wardley started her new career yesterday as a nursery teacher at Pippa Pop-ins Nursery School and Overnight Children's Hotel, in Chelsea. "My time with the duchess was a wonderful experience that really prepared me for life," she tells Dempster. "It is lovely here and I am very excited."

**3 September:** "Soignée Princess Michael has a small but thorny fashion problem to mull over." The princess, Dempster explains, will be the guest of honour at a party to celebrate the opening of designer Christian Lacroix's boutique in Sloane Street. Should she wear something by Lacroix, or not? "I'm sure she will be her ever tactful self," the loyal Dempster concludes.

**8 September:** "The corridors of Kensington Palace may have been filled with tension in recent weeks, but the state apartments will soon be ringing with the sound of good cheer when Christopher Lloyd, Surveyor of the Queen's Pictures, takes over the rooms for a few hours next month. The occasion will be the launch of his book *The Royal Collection*, an exploration of the Queen's pictures."

**9 September:** More than 200 guests were at Drones restaurant in Belgravia on Monday night, "as owner Nicholas Kerman and his wife Juanita provided oysters and Sichel white wine, followed with a cabaret by singer Baroness Issy van Randwyck." Celebrities present included Jeremy Lloyd, "scriptwriter and author of *'Allo 'Allo* and *Grace and Favour* among other hit series."

**11 September:** The Duke of Hamilton's eldest daughter, Lady Eleanor Douglas-Hamilton, has begun work as a veterinary assistant. "Although flame-haired Ellie's job is a temporary one, she hopes to find a permanent post so that she can go on to qualify as a veterinary nurse," Dempster discloses.

**15 September:** The Prince of Wales is supporting a scheme by the Birds of Prey Centre to introduce barn owls to Gloucestershire. "Prince Charles is concerned about all wildlife and the conservation of the British countryside," explains the centre's director, Jemima Parry-Jones.

**16 September:** An elegantly written report on the Queen Charlotte's Ball. "Chatting with former champion jockey Johnny Francome was dress designer Lucinda Graham, whose father sold the family estate, Sydmonton, to Sir Andrew Lloyd-Webber — piquantly she is landlady to Lambourn trainer Charlie Brooks, who has been romancing Francome's wife Miriam since their 15-year marriage ended in March last year when she went home to mother." He neglects to mention that Charlie Brooks is the trainer of Dempster's own racehorse.

**17 September:** Dai Llewellyn has celebrated his return from a trip to war-torn Yugoslavia with a party "at the elegant Dorchester Club". Guests included Jilly Cooper and cabaret singer Baroness Issy van Randwyck.

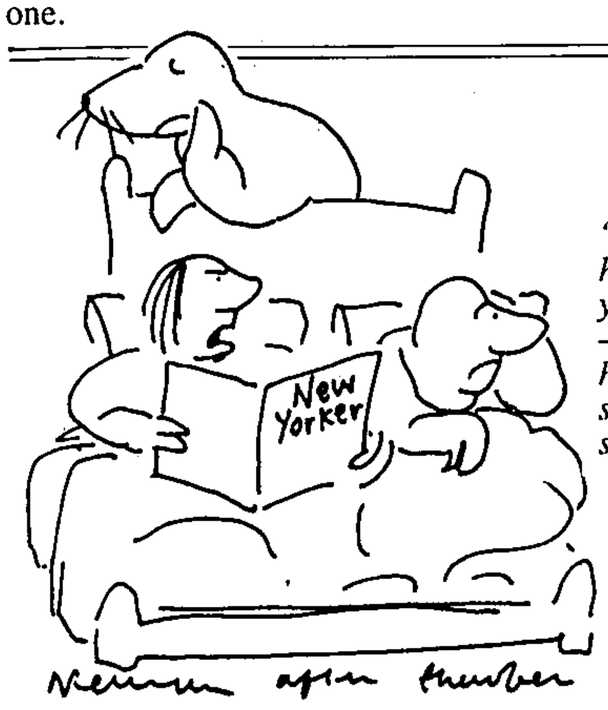
**23 September:** Shipping executive's daughter Catherine Hazlitt is to be married today to former army officer Michael Wake-Walker. "It was an old-fashioned holiday romance," laughs bubbly Catherine, 32. "And we've been together ever since."

**24 September:** Romance has blossomed between Baroness Francesca Thyssen and Archduke Karl von Habsburg. "Karl comes from a wonderful, large, close-knit family," the baroness tells Dempster, "and we hope for lots and lots and lots of children."

**28 September:** Author Susan Hill has cause for celebration: her play *The Woman in Black* today becomes the longest-running show in the history of the Fortune Theatre. "It's marvellous news," Hill tells Dempster.

**29 September:** Dempster's entire column is filled with a report on a small-time conman, Graham Leaver, the self-styled Vicomte Guiy de Montfort, who has been arrested in America. In a legal deposition applying for political asylum in the US, de Montfort claims: "The Establishment used Nigel Dempster, the notorious but extremely powerful gossip columnist... a known bisexual but conveniently married... to direct a long-term, highly damaging campaign aimed at my destruction." Dempster describes this as "hilarious". And so it is: if the poor Vicomte thinks Dempster is capable of running "highly damaging" stories, he is clearly unfit to plead.

**30 September:** "My personal thanks for the avalanche of replies by Diary buffs to the 18 September competition concerning the *Nigel Dempster Address Book*, which Pan has just published in paperback at £5.99, in advance of the column celebrating the start of its 20th year next Thursday." The prize offered was an autographed copy for the first 100 correct entrants, "but, because of the response, I am sending a further 100 copies of this information-filled tome. Congratulations to all!" And God bless us, every one.




*"All right, have it your way – you heard a seal snore"*

# Sally Deedes

**SO MUCH for the citizen's charter, launched to "demand the same high standards of service from banks, accountants and suppliers as required from government departments and public services".**

This is just so much hogwash when one considers how the Government's Property Service Agency (PSA) was able to treat one individual, Andrew Morrison, whose business went into liquidation and who is now himself bankrupt and homeless with no redress against the PSA.

The charter appears to include a nifty get-out clause that prevents the ombudsperson from investigating complaints about government departments in matters relating to commercial or contractual transactions. And Andrew Morrison Developments certainly had cause to complain.

The firm had been in negotiation with the PSA since July 1989. Mr Morrison, acting as a developer, had bought a site in Stourbridge town centre intending to build three shops on it with offices above. Clients were interested in two of the shops and the PSA approached Mr Morrison wanting to incorporate the remaining area into a Jobshop and unemployment office. It was suggested that his company buy two adjoining sites to facilitate the PSA's scheme.

Mr Morrison ensured solicitors had been instructed on both sides before he went ahead with the purchase. From then on the company, its architects and surveyors were at the mercy of the PSA. Over three years the company had to deal with four different senior estate surveyors, each of whom had to be instructed afresh each time there was a changeover. The architects were required to draw up five different planning applications, which entailed site investigation reports, cost plans and new insurance deals to be negotiated.

Then the PSA requested more space, causing Mr Morrison to cancel the original letting contracts. The PSA assured Mr Morrison of its good intentions but continually found reasons for delaying final signature. On 19 March 1991 it stated that "final documentation would be resolved shortly and the company could begin development in the near future". Three months later "matters were progressing as quickly as possible"; one month later they just needed "one final perusal". At this point the Midland Bank, which was funding Morrison Developments, began to be concerned and following the intervention of Nicholas Budgen, MP for Wolverhampton, the PSA wrote a letter confirming its intention to proceed.

One of the many changes required by the PSA was the design of a large and showy lobby entrance which reduced the original floor space considerably. In January this year the PSA wrote expressing "great disappointment that [Andrew Morrison] was now [due to its own change of the scheme] only able to provide a minimum area of 10,750 sq ft" as opposed to the original 12,000 and demanded a reduction in rent accordingly. "Notwithstanding this," the PSA wrote, "we are prepared to proceed with the scheme."

Two months later — three years after its original interest — the PSA withdrew on the ground that the scheme was now too small (bear in mind that originally it had not wanted the entire area). Instead it would be using a crown property which had recently housed the DHSS and whose impending vacation had been known for two years.

Mr Morrison has been unable to relet the property, is bankrupt and homeless. The Midland Bank faces a substantial loss; its continued support of the project, it told Mr Morrison, was "based on the assumption that information provided by the PSA was based on fact and not fiction". The architects, Mason Richards of Wolverhampton — a company with considerable experience in this type of development — are amazed. "We could not remember when we had previously experienced such questionable actions by a private client, let alone a government body with aspirations of reputable behaviour," a spokesperson said.

Another MP, Warren Hawkesley, Tory member for Halesowen, has taken up Mr Morrison's cause and told me: "Mr Morrison not unnaturally trusted a government body, and they have let him down. Legally the PSA may have no responsibility, but morally they most certainly do."

Dr Ann Robinson, head of the policy unit at the Institute of Directors, wrote in June 1992 to William Waldegrave, minister for silly walks, whose portfolio includes the citizen's charter: "Surely in protecting the right of the citizen as an individual in respect of public services the charter should also consider the rights and treatment of the citizen as a businessman in relation to public bodies. It would appear that Mr Morrison has been badly let down by the PSA (now Property Services Holdings) with dire personal consequences to himself."

Four months have passed and Dr Robinson has not yet even received a reply to her letter! So much for public accountability...

# DOWN ON THE FARM

## with 'Old Muckspreader'

**THE same multinational pesticide companies who are chiefly responsible for stripping the British countryside of its wild flowers are spending thousands in conning the public that they care about the environment.**

The latest ad from the German giant Bayer shows a mass of poppies growing at the edge of a prairie-like wheat field. The company is encouraging farmers to leave a narrow strip unsprayed while drenching the rest of the crop in weedkiller.

Any rambler looking over a hedge will be deceived into thinking there are still some wild flowers left, while the chaps in suits — whose only interest in the environment is as a source of organisms to spray — are made to look eco-friendly.

There is also the added advantage that a few "weeds" allowed at the field edge are likely to spread their seeds around, thus ensuring healthy weedkiller sales in the future. Conservation is turning into a nice little earner for the pesticide industry...

***BAYER is just one of the companies chucking some of its burgeoning profit at the innocuous-sounding Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG). This well-intentioned but ineffectual organisation is currently being wined, dined and showered with funds by the likes of chemical giant Ciba-Geigy and the French-owned Rhone-Poulenc.***

***It is a shrewd move by a pesticide industry keen to boost its green credentials. Unlike more muscular conservation bodies, the FWAG people believe there is nothing wrong with a chemical-ridden industrial agriculture that a few oak saplings and the odd cornflower can't put right.***

***Plant up the occasional field corner or spare a few poppies at the field edge and you'll get away with scorched earth in the rest of the countryside, says FWAG. Which makes them the ideal front organisation for an industry trying to brighten up its caring image.***

***The pesticide people know they are on to a winner by forking out a few quid for a new nature trail or digging a farm pond. When you're trying to look environment friendly, it is all good PR.***

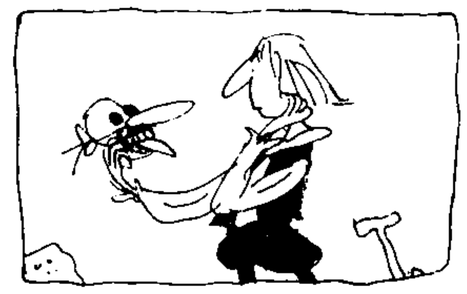
***And with FWAG's very existence heavily dependent on handouts from the British Agrochemicals Association, the group's loyalty and discretion can be relied upon in the future.***

CHAOS in the money markets has presented the barley barons with something of a dilemma at their new Covent Garden eyrie. In the impenetrable logic of the common agricultural policy (CAP) the plunging pound has meant a rise in subsidies for the jolly yeomen.

It is all to do with green rates and the international strength of the Sicilian olive. Odd, then, that baron chief David Naish should be deploring the present uncertainty in the currency markets and batting on about a speedy return to the exchange rate mechanism.

The reason is that the fat cats of Long Hectare fear for their feather-bedded future. Euro largesse to farmers currently costs every family in Britain £720 a year. Farmer Naish and his merry band know there's no way the public would wear it if it wasn't well camouflaged under Eurojargon. But with all these fault lines appearing in the EC, there's always the risk of collapse.

The barons know that if the UK ever pulls out of CAP, there will be tears before harvest time...



# LUVVIES

**Where would you go?**

High Arctic in Canada, where I would track down and watch a pack of wolves. I am interested in them because I have two wolf-hounds that closely resemble the wild creatures. I spend hours at the zoo watching the poor animals in their cages, and it breaks my heart.

**LYNDA LA PLANTE**
**The Times**

I ask her [Juliette Binoche] about her work on her next movie with Jeremy Irons — called *Damage* — and am told: "Changing someone's life is not the best, is not wanting to change the other life. It is being who you are that changes another's life. Do you understand? You change someone's life by being who you are."

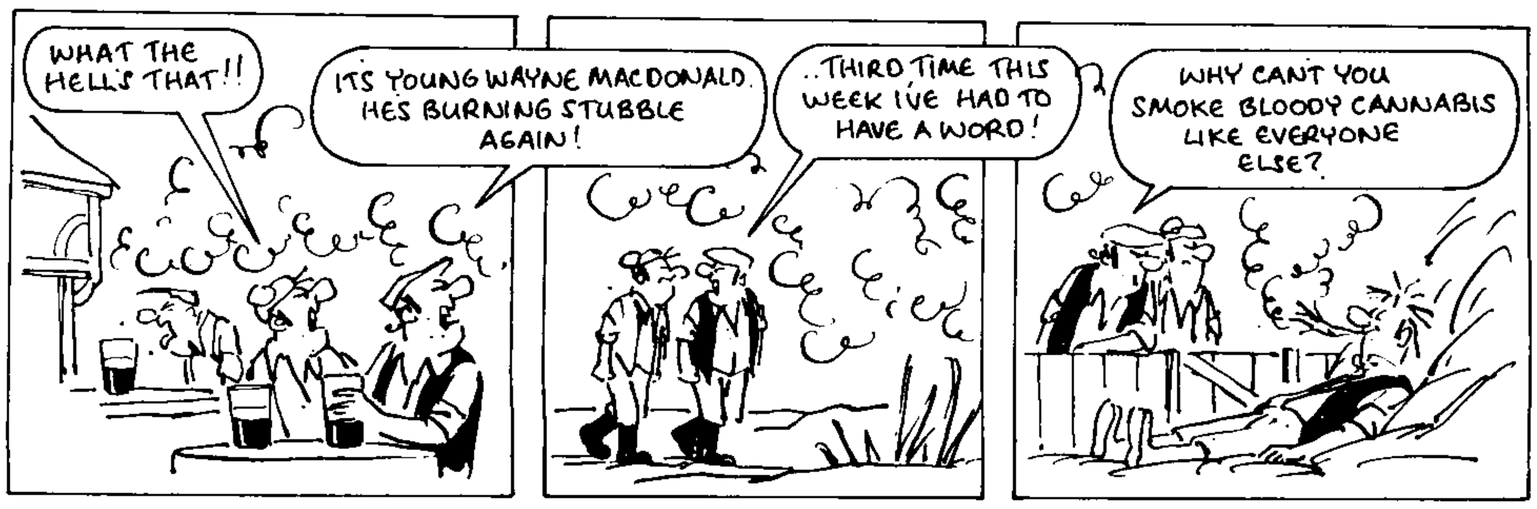
**YOU Magazine**

*Submitted by E. Strobes, Anon.*

***An occasional column featuring gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for entries printed.***

# Old Macdonald

ALBERT


WHAT THE HELL'S THAT!!
ITS YOUNG WAYNE MACDONALD. HES BURNING STUBBLE AGAIN!
..THIRD TIME THIS WEEK I'VE HAD TO HAVE A WORD!
WHY CANT YOU SMOKE BLOODY CANNABIS LIKE EVERYONE ELSE?

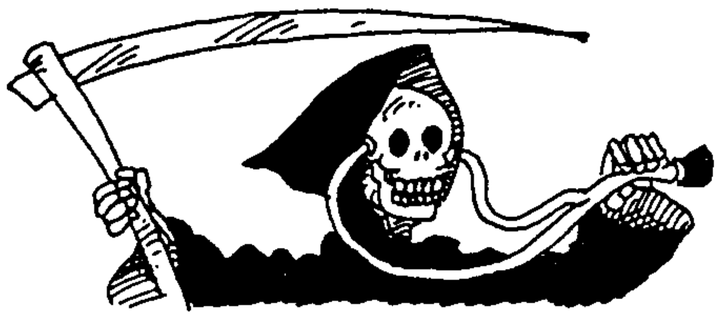
# RIVER POLLUTION

**THE stream of fishy goings-on at Yorkshire Water (reported in *Eye* 803) continue, it would seem.**

The company has just been fined £4,000 and ordered to pay £510 costs after admitting discharging untreated sewage into the River Went and Went Beck.

Magistrates heard that fish were killed as the effluent travelled two miles from South Featherstone pumping station, down the beck and into the river. It was the sixth time Yorkshire Water had been fined for similar offences in just three years.

The private water company has promised to replace the dead fish. Luckily, with profits of £124 million last year, it might just be able to afford to do so...



## DOING THE ROUNDS

**THE legacy of William Waldegrave's absurd waiting list initiative lives on. Surgeons at Bath's Royal United Hospital have been ordered to clear their "over two years" waiting lists for varicose veins and in-growing toenails in preference to removing "urgent" breast lumps (ie proven cancers and highly suspicious growths).**

Surgical manager Janet Christopher told irate consultants: "If you don't comply, you'll be fined £16,000... which happens to be the salary of one of your junior doctors." The RUH is so in debt that it has closed three wards and has designs on a fourth.

● **SWINDON health authority** is reviewing its discharge procedures following complaints about the treatment of an elderly woman. She was admitted to **Princess Margaret Hospital** with abdominal pain and later discharged home alone without support or her family's knowledge.

A diagnosis of terminal cancer was made two weeks later but was overlooked and she was subjected to unnecessary bowel preparation for colonoscopy. The relatives were not informed of the diagnosis for three weeks, shortly before her death. Their complaints took a mere 18 months to be investigated.

● THE **Royal Sussex County Hospital** in **Brighton** indulges in the rather dubious habit of videoing all cases of major trauma in its casualty department. Junior doctors are expected to converse with the camera during resuscitation and the tapes, recorded without the patients' or relatives' consent, are supposed to be erased shortly afterwards. However, many are being kept for teaching and medico-legal purposes.

● THE sorry state of paediatric cardiac surgery at the **United Bristol Healthcare Trust** (*Eye* 793, 797) has been confirmed by an internal audit of the last two years' operations. The results of procedures to correct two congenital heart abnormalities (Tetrallogy of Fallot and transposition of the arteries) were especially poor.

James Wishart, chairman of the hospital management committee and medical adviser to the trust board, is required to maintain standards of medical practice at UBHT. Curiously he has not felt it necessary to inform the trust board or the trust's purchasers of these findings. Could it be because he is also associate director of cardiac surgery?

Meanwhile UBHT continues to squander its resources in pitiful attempts to buy staff loyalty. Every junior doctor was recently given a brand new leather filofax and Parker pen, complete with the UBHT crest and slogan.

● **WESSEX regional health authority** has announced the wastage of at least £20 million on useless computer projects. Ken Jarrold, regional general manager, said it was hard to say exactly how much of the £42 million "regional information systems plan" (RISP) was worthwhile because "fundamental mismanagement makes it impossible to know how much was spent, by whom and for what."

Those responsible for instigating RISP no longer work for Wessex RHA, but their main folly was to farm out the region's computing services to a private company coincidentally formed and staffed by ex-Wessex RHA employees. The auditors considered this subverted the interests of the authority "deliberately or otherwise".

Wessex RHA is also heading the national "bail out a fund-holding GP" competition. It has had to give extra funds to each of its 17 impecunious first-wave fundholders totalling £378,300. So far 12 of the country's 14 RHA's have had to top up such practices.

● THE **department of health** has also been forced to bail out the **Wellhouse NHS Trust** (aka "Shithouse Trust", *Eye* 801), which encompasses **Edgware** and **Barnet** general hospitals and their projected £5.3 million debt. Barnet has shed 84 jobs and is closing three wards including Simpson, a busy acute surgical ward, and the geriatric day hospital. Compulsory redundancies are foremost among the over 50s, many of whom have worked in the hospital for years and were given very little notice. Meanwhile the number of patients waiting more than two years for operations in the **North West Thames RHA** rose from just two before the election to 155 two months after it.

● IN **NORTHUMBERLAND**, the opening of **Wansbeck Hospital** will be heralded by a specially commissioned song. The £10,000 cost will cover the composer's fee, though many would rather the money was donated to the hospital's CAT scanner appeal. At present, patients have to travel to Newcastle for scans. However, Mr Frank Ward, one of the health chiefs working on the new hospital, insists there is not "a cat in hell's chance" of the money being transferred.

● **SOMERSET'S** hospitals are reaping the rewards of trust status. Both **Yeovil** and **Taunton** are £200,000 overspent just four months into the financial year. Between 1974 and 1986 (before the reforms) the *whole* of Somerset was well managed to the point that there was never an overspend in any one year. Since taking on the trust mantle, Taunton hospital has squandered £5 million on computer hardware, operators, clerks, information gatherers, patients' charter-minders, facilitators and quality control managers. The management executive has now concluded that "activity within the trust is considerably higher than planned or funded and cannot be allowed to continue unchecked..." They are now refusing to employ bank nurses, leaving some wards dangerously understaffed.

● IN **BRISTOL'S Southmead NHS Trust**, chief executive Philip Chubb has come up with a novel solution to the chronic shortage of medical house-officers (*Eyes* 797, 800): he's decided to transfer two house surgeons to the medical side as from 1 August 1993. This is likely to precipitate a similar manpower crisis on the surgical side. The director of surgery, Humphrey White M. Chir FRCS, has now joined the director of medicine in resignation.

*M.D.*

## CULT CORNER

**THE "church" of scientology is busy spreading the word in the old eastern block. This time the unwitting target is Albania.**

The "church", like many big businesses, has been quick to spot a potentially lucrative market beyond the old iron curtain. Having funded a library of journalism in Moscow — not bad for a cult with an impressive record in harassing hacks who write anything other than flattering stories about them — the Hubbardistas now claim the Albanian government is planning to use scientology techniques to run some of its ministries.

Needless to say "church" members in the UK are being urged to stump up cash for this latest exercise, spurred on, no doubt, by the newsletter's liberal sprinkling of L. Ron Hubbardspeak: "The power (defined as light year kilo tons per micro second) of a thetan is measured by nothing else than the distance (defined as spherical spatial length) around him in this environment that he can control."

The once downtrodden, dirt poor peasants will

*"Two minutes starting... now! If you're so clever, why are you a Grade XVII(B) Civil servant working for the Inland Revenue?"*

no doubt appreciate the arrival of 30,000 copies of *The Way to Happiness* and a consignment of the "Oxford Analysis Capacity", a personality test the cult uses to persuade raw recruits they have problems to which scientology or dianetics are the answer.

### O·B·N

As a local cab driver I recently had the pleasure to convey Lady Olga Maitland.

Despite much adverse criticism I found her to be a most delightful, charming, down to earth lady — a great conversationalist and ready to listen to my point of view.

*R. HORRY*
*Letter in Sutton Borough Guardian*

**Rupert Murdoch is a genius...**

*WILLIAM SHAWCROSS*
*(in his biography of Murdoch)*

*Submitted by Miss J.M. Lumsden, Jessica Wright.*

***£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.***

## UN NEWS

**MAURICE STRONG, dapper billionaire head of the United Nations' Rio earth summit, seems to be suffering from inverted hydrophobia: far from having a fear of water, Strong can't keep away from the stuff.**

*Eye* readers will recall his part in the plot to dehydrate the valley he lives in in Arizona and sell the water on to nearby cities.

News now suggests that he has accepted a major appointment with Ontario Hydro, a company that floods valleys in Canada. He has also accepted a job as chief environmental adviser to the UN's development programme, where staff will soon be issued with dowsing rods...

### YOBS

# ROTTEN BOROUGHS

## BENT

**WITH Bent council hundreds of millions of pounds in debt, the Tories who run the borough are mounting a strong campaign to retrieve monies owed to it and control town hall finances.**

Funny, then, that John Warren, the council's deputy leader and one of the keenest supporters of Bent's poll tax recovery programme, should have been spotted at Willesden county court representing fellow councillor Nkechi Amalu-Johnson in a wrangle over... money she owes the council of which he is deputy leader!

Amalu-Johnson, as *Eye* readers know, is one of two African nationalists who defected from Labour to propel the Conservatives to power. Warren was speaking out for her in his capacity as a solicitor in an action brought by Bent to recover a £6,000 car loan Amazulu owes to the council.

When a local hack asked Warren about the apparent contradiction between his political and professional roles, he at first denied that he had represented Amazulu... until it was confirmed by the court. Is Bent barmy or what?

## HINCKLEY

**A THOUSAND years of sloth has been rudely shattered in the rural wastes of Hinckley by a vendetta launched by the Tory council against maverick independent councillor Mike Handford.**

After being kicked off the health and leisure committee by fellow members, Handford has uncovered a can of municipal worms that are native to Bent or Birmingham or Sheffield but hitherto unknown in this dead corner of Leicestershire.

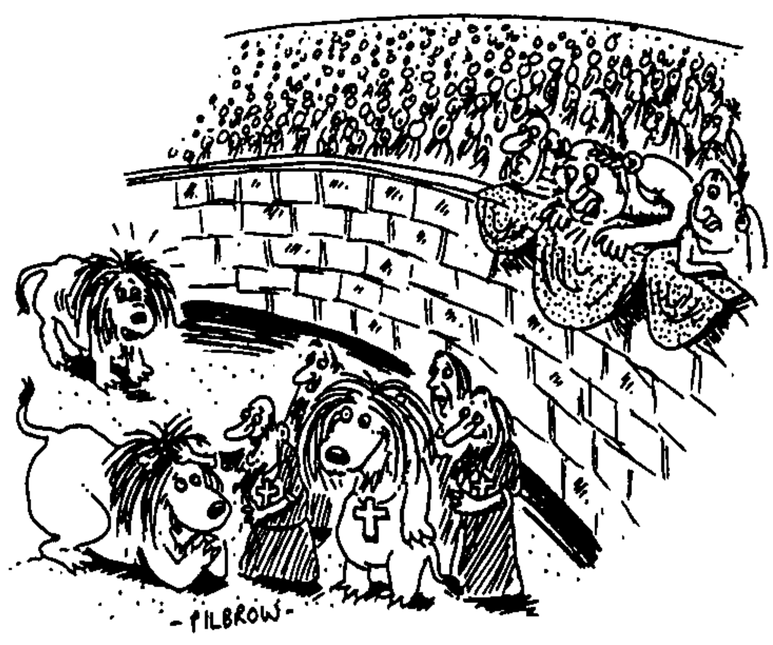
Handford, a leisure industry consultant, had been offered work by a company called Berkeley Investments, which was allegedly involved in refurbishing Chatham docks in Kent. When this news reached Hinckley, Tory councillors were furious and booted him off leisure on the pretext that he had used his position as a councillor to seek advantage in his work.

Before they threw him out, Handford told councillors that the company had approached *him* with an offer of work, and that his suspicions had been alerted when it sent an "irrelevant" questionnaire for him to fill in about sports management.

Somehow the details from the questionnaire were reproduced in the council's own report into Handford's alleged conflict of interest. Even more curious, however, was that Handford discovered to his astonishment that no trace of Berkeley Investments could be found at its Beckenham address and that the shipyard-renovation project did not exist! Oh — and it also turned out that the council had been hiring private detectives based at the same address as Berkeley Investments!

It is of course entirely coincidental that Handford had previously annoyed the council by asking too many awkward questions when it privatised the Hinckley leisure centre.

Handford, who has long been a thorn in the side of Hinckley's officials, believes he was set up to be discredited. The local fraud squad is now investigating...




*"Oh,no – not another bloody convert"*

## KENT

**FIONA DALE, a Kent parent, achieved an astonishing feat this summer which makes the antics of Anneka Rice in TV's dreadful *Challenge Anneka* look like so much, er, high-profile photo opportunity posturing.**

Ms Dale did try to enlist the help of Ms Rice, but the gigglesome one's bleeding heart was unable to rise to the challenge: rebuilding Sandling primary school in six weeks over the summer. Undaunted, Ms Dale went ahead and did it herself.

The result is that Kent education department now owes Ms Dale £200,000 — that, at least, is how much she saved the department by single-handedly arranging the total rebuilding of the school.

Exasperated by the dilapidated and substandard buildings, leaking roof, damp and antiquated facilities — about which Tory-controlled Kent had done nothing for 15 years — Ms Dale, whose child attends the school, decided to take it on.

She bullied, cajoled and browbeat parents, building contractors, plant hire firms, builders' merchants and decorators to do the work, which came either at cost or for free. Having started *from scratch* at the end of July, the new school was ready when the new term started on 7 September.

Kent is severely embarrassed and the ungracious official position is to offer "no comment". Perhaps when Ms Dale has had a rest she could start rebuilding the rest of Britain — or at least take over from Anneka Rice.

## SHEFFIELD

**CONGRATULATIONS to those newspapers who finally caught up — months and *months* after the *Eye* — with the financial disaster at Sheffield city council caused by last year's absurd World Student Games.**

While the hack-pack waited lamely for the district auditor's report into the games losses to be released (it tells barely half the story), the *Eye* had revealed the scale of the mounting losses before the event had even taken place.

Sheffield district auditor Gordon Sutton has now announced officially that public funds went "out of control" when the city hosted the sporting extravaganza nobody else wanted and even fewer watched.

But Sutton has let the city off lightly. His report points to losses of only £10.4 million. As the *Eye* has explained, the games have cost the Sheffield public around £200 million. Operating costs for actually putting on the three-week spectacle cost nearly £25 million, not £10.4 million, thanks to excessive 25 per cent interest payments still being tallied, although council officers cleverly hoodwinked members into overlooking interest, as if it didn't really count.

Sheffield also spent £147 million building some of the most radical, state-of-the-art sports stadiums in the world to host the events. The astronomical costs, Sheffield council explained, would be met by regular, well-attended sports events at facilities nobody else could match. Unfortunately Sheffield is now finding out the hard way that despite healthy attendances the cost of staging prestigious events outweighs the income brought in from punters. And freebie tickets for hundreds of screaming schoolkids do not bring in much "indirect income" through sales of crisps and cold drinks.

The district auditor places much blame on city housing boss Ray Gridley, whom he accuses of not being "objective in his assessment of potential income". But Gridley was only following orders. As *Eye* readers know, the real culprit, ex-council leader Clive Betts, has left Sheffield for a sinecure at Westminster where he is MP for Sheffield Attercliffe. Betts made the staging of the games a personal crusade and met little opposition in the town hall. His cowardly Labour colleagues, it has now been revealed, had calculated the likely losses and threatened sabotage but went off sulking instead of bringing the council administration to its knees.

With time running out for Sheffield's bankruptcy-threatened finances, desperate measures are needed. Yet no one has yet proposed that council transport bosses do the sensible thing and call off the totally unnecessary £100 million supertram system, à la Manchester, the city plans for its next brilliant coup.

# Letters

## Barnett

*Sir,*

*In a number of recent issues you have referred to me in connection with my political activities in the Midlands. You have not allowed facts to get in the way of what you may have thought were good stories.*

*As everyone in the constituency party knows, I have no ambition to succeed Mr Roy Hattersley as MP for Sparkbrook (where there is in any event no vacancy) and you were wrong to suggest otherwise. You were also wrong to suggest that I have been removed from some local political committees.*

*Yours faithfully,*
*ERICA BARNETT.*

*Sir,*

*I refer to the (above) letter from my daughter, Erica Barnett, concerning articles in recent issues where you have mis-stated my daughter's ambitions and political activities.*

*Not only were you wrong in what you said about Erica, you were also wrong to say that I am embarrassed by her behaviour and that I have disinherited her. I have done no such thing.*

*Yours faithfully,*
*LORD BARNETT.*

● *PRIVATE EYE apologises to Lord Barnett and Erica Barnett for the distress caused to them.*

## Lookalike

**McAliskey**

**Mellor**

*Sir,*

*Have any of your readers noticed the remarkable resemblance between David Mellor MP QC (and much-loved national treasure) and Bernadette McAliskey, ex-MP? Are they somehow related?*

*Yours faithfully,*
*ROBERT JOHNSON,*

*London SE5.*

## Sikh as a parrot

*Sir,*

*Your article about the chicanery in Sparkbrook may be broadly correct, but you are revealing your ethnocentricity when you write about "high caste Asians".*

*Moslems, the majority of the activists in Sparkbrook, do not have a caste system except the plutocratic one shared by all of us on this sceptred isle. There are very few Brahmins in Birmingham and they are not concentrated in any one area. Most local Hindus are Gujeratis of the third, or Vaisya, caste, plus a few Punjabis who are so deracinated that they do not know what caste they are and use the Sikh greeting.*

*The Gujeratis, while quite numerous over the whole city, are no more in a position to take over a constituency than, say Irish, Poles or Greek Cypriots. If you need a multicultural adviser, I'd be happy to oblige.*

*Yours faithfully,*
*MARTIN "PANDITJI"*
*EDWARDS,*

*Birmingham.*

## All seeing *Eye*

*Sir,*

*Falling behind in reading of the* EYE *can have interesting compensations.*

*Following the cataclysmic events of the last week in the financial markets and the Government's ignominious forced U-turn on central planks of its economic policy (resulting in pound devaluation, ERM membership suspension, interest rate reduction etc.), the very first item in* EYE *802 had me checking the front cover to ensure that this was not some cryptic after-the-event piece rather than the prophetic nugget that it was.*

*I quote: "...there can be no sustained economic recovery with the pound at its present level... In order to stimulate UK exports and choke off imports, the pound, if it were once again allowed to find its own level, must (and would) fall by up to 20 per cent. It may not be possible to agree such a large drop within the European exchange rate mechanism, but the Government could get away with a 'temporary' withdrawal, accompanied (as it would be) by the desperately-needed sharp cut in UK interest rates."*

*If, as appears to be so, the chancellor is at last discarding his minions' erudite dissections on economic strategy in favour of a quick squint through the columns of the* EYE, *may I suggest a free subscription whipround for him? The investment could well reap valuable dividends in terms of UK economic recovery.*

*Yours faithfully,*
*CLIVE WARREN,*

*Royston, Herts.*

## I-Sky...

*Sir,*

*Two things strike me:*

*1) Mr David Mellor, for all his private idiocies, is one of the few Tory ministers* NOT *committed to the wholesale privatisation of the BBC.*

*2) The* SUN, *Mr Mellor's noisiest critic, is owned by Mr Rupert Murdoch, a man with his own agenda for the future of broadcasting.*

*Are these two facts in any way related? I think we should be told.*

*Yours faithfully,*
*DAVID SIMPKIN,*

*Winchester.*

## Arms and the Main man

*Sir,*

*Alan Main (Arms News,* EYE *803) is the world's* BEST *arms dealer. It's not fair of you to assassinate the character who can't deliver death. We need more like him.*

*Yours for peace,*
*DAVID BURNS,*

*London N8.*

## Banana da-query

*Sir,*

*Congratulations on your excellent organ, now restored to its previous vigour.*

*I write in reply to Catherine Lamb (Letters, 803) who seems to be taken by the rather strange idea that the ministry of fisheries and food and John Gummer are in philanthropic mood with British banana policy.*

*The banana policy was formulated for two reasons: the first was to keep West Indians on the islands and not emigrating to the UK. The second is to subsidise the companies which are members of the Fruit Importing Association.*

*To elaborate: Fyffes and the others are in the enviable position of being monopoly purchasers in the islands, and therefore keep purchasing prices low, and also being monopoly exporters to the UK they are able to overcharge the British banana eater. The price of "British" bananas is 50 percent higher than world market rates, so there is a very tidy profit for the companies in this racket. When there was a proposal in the treasury during the 1980s to end this scheme in favour of "free market bananas" and direct financial aid to the islands it was defeated.*

*In short Mr Gummer and the Fruit Importers Association are screwing both the impoverished growers and the British consumer — and painting it all as philanthropy! If that doesn't deserve a knighthood, what does?*

*Yours sincerely,*
*JAMES STUART,*

*Leicester.*

## Sub-culture vultures

*Sir,*

*Despite Tim Tate's red-herrings about Mr Bray and his "Lamp of Thoth" magazine (*EYE *803), the only publication which has contained explicit details on how to satanically abuse children was his own. Thank goodness it has been pulped.*

*No member of the Temple of Set has ever been prosecuted or convicted for child abuse. Its leader, Dr Aquino is still a colonel in the army reserve. (54 errors and counting.)*

*Tate strangely omitted to mention that Mr Chris Bray is the same man whom he "doorstepped" in the discredited* COOK REPORT SPECIAL *on satanic abuse and whose bookshop was subsequently burned down by religious fanatics shortly after the broadcast. Much to Tate's chagrin Mr Bray succeeded in obtaining a broadcast apology.*

*Tate has continued to harass Mr Bray and regurgitated similar allegations in* CHILDREN FOR THE DEVIL *— along with a contradictory legal disclaimer. "Christopher Bray is* NOT *himself a satanist and has* NO *personal involvement in any of the practices described in this book," it says.*

*Unfortunately for Tate he wasn't as circumspect with his defamatory statements about Det Supt Peter Coles. Which is why his book is now in the bin.*

*Yours sincerely,*
*ANGELA MALHAM,*

*Trustee, Sub-culture Alternatives Freedom Foundation, Leeds.*

## Occult corner...

*Sir,*

*I wonder if any of your readers have noted the remarkable similarity between the address of the "Sub-culture Alternative Freedom Foundation", attackers of Tim Tate's book about satanism, and that of an organisation noted for purveying crystal balls, occult texts, and other "Magickal" paraphernalia?*

*Are they by any chance related? I think we should be told.*

*Yours faithfully,*
*NICKY HAYES,*

*Huddersfield.*

## Lookalike

**Flair**

**Bushell**

*Sir,*

*I wonder if any of your readers have noticed the remarkable resemblance between Ric Flair, the world championship wrestling doll (available in all good toyshops) and the* SUN *newspaper columnist Garry Bushell? Do you think by any chance they are related?*

*Yours sincerely,*
*H. MOTTERSHEAD,*

*Wythenshawe, Manchester.*

*"I'll have the Blackbird Pie – rare"*

## Dr Death toll

*Sir,*

*Yugoslavia may be a "lost cause", but this surely has absolutely nothing to do with the "civilising" influence of Messrs the British diplomats. Lord Owen, with his outspoken advocacy of a military solution, is clearly an excellent choice to lead the "peace" mission. Would that be the same Dr Owen, who as Labour's foreign minister had to defend Britain's sale of military aircraft to Indonesia — after its notorious invasion and massacres in East Timor? Still, Dr Owen appears to believe in the unique and special case of Serbian aggression — hence the outrageous sanctions on Belgrade.*

*And what about Lord Carrington? What a smashing success his "peace" mission was. That wouldn't be the same Lord Carrington who was UK delegate to the UN when the west gave its upstanding support for the legitimacy of Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge in Cambodia (1979) against Vietnamese incursions which finally put a stop to his slaughter?*

*Not a very civil civil servant, we fear.*

*Yours,*
*(Sir) ALISTAIR FITZROY MACLEAN,*

*Edinburgh.*

## Healthy lack of interest

*Sir,*

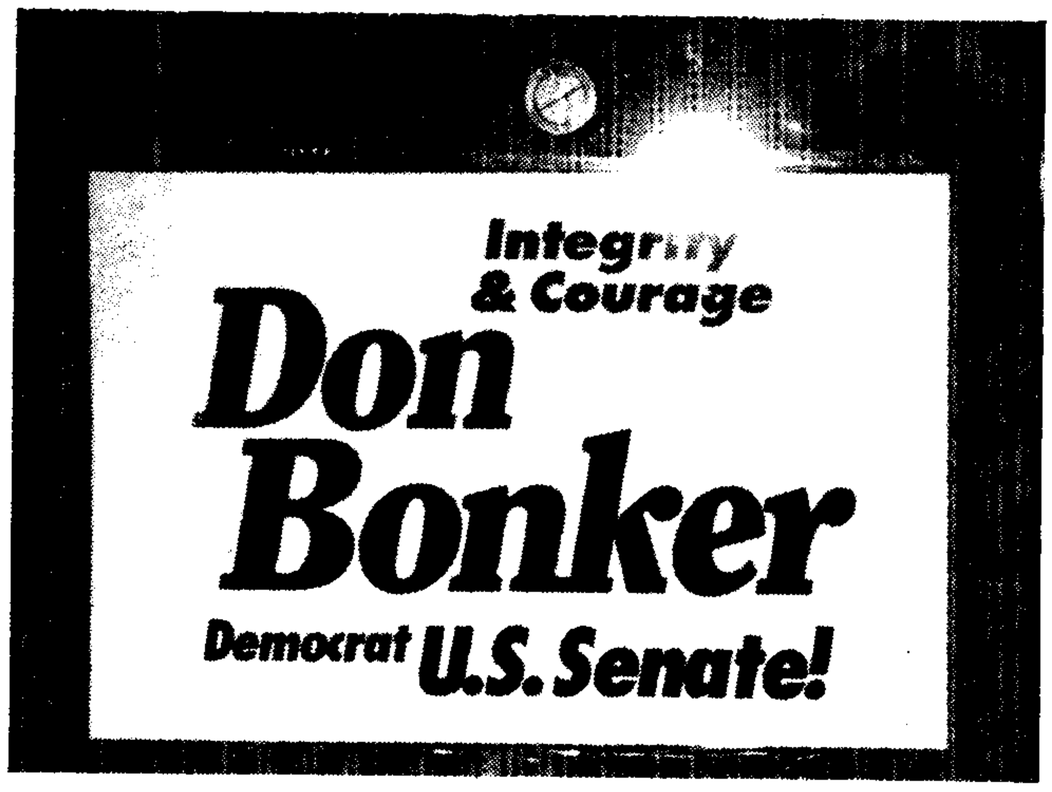
*May I refer to your article on 11 September 1992 with reference to the West Berkshire CHC meeting and say that we were not amused, especially as the notification was in the* READING POST's *offices a week before and that we have received an apology.*

*What you might find more to your taste is the fact that in spite of well over £1,000 of timely advertising in local papers, the targeted distribution of over 750 newsletters and broadcasts on local radio, less than 50 people turned up at a total of 10 public meetings and roadshows on the three trust applications: the acute unit, the priority care services, and the ambulance service.*

*If, in some way,* PRIVATE EYE *can stir the apathetic British public into caring about the future of their health service, you will have performed a great service.*

*Yours faithfully,*
*GEORGE DUNFORD,*

*Chairman, The West Berkshire Community Health Council.*




# I-SPY

***Seattle***

**Submitted by D.J. Brambell.** £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

## Jackson 5, 6 or 7

*Sir,*

*Did I miss something? In one issue, a Carlton TV spokesman told you their director of programmes Paul Jackson had not commissioned his own companies: he said Charles Denton did the deed. In the next issue, Charles Denton said he certainly didn't do the commissioning and doesn't even work for Carlton TV.*

*In one issue, the Carlton TV spokesman says Paul Jackson will resign his other directorships in December 1992. In the next issue, Paul Jackson writes to say he resigned them in November 1991.*

*That's OK then. Nothing inconsistent or sinister there.*

*NAME & ADDRESS SUPPLIED*

## Agony and ecstasy

*Sir,*

*Truly, I have arrEyeved! Or not so truly, it would seem: "...taking half a tab of it, put something in his mouth and washed it down with a glass of water." Get your facts right, chaps. It was vodka.*

*Respectfully yours,*
*TIM FIELDING,*

*Confusion Records, Jamaica.*

## Sich as a parrot...

*Sir,*

*Your Literary Review is not quite right about the copies of* A FOOL'S ALPHABET *submitted for the Booker Prize.*

*At our request, Sebastian Faulks came into the office and signed a number of books which were to be sent out to bookshops who had asked for autographed copies.*

*Unfortunately, six of this batch were inadvertently submitted to the Booker judges.*

*No hubris; just an understandable slip. Better luck next time.*

*Yours faithfully,*
*ELIZABETH SICH,*

*Hutchinson, London SW1V 2SA*

## A Scots intellectual writes...

*Sir,*

*The dispute in your columns between southern softies and northern oiks is becoming a little too heated for my liking. Can I just weigh in with a few well chosen words of moderation and reason?*

*You're all English bastards.*

*Yours sincerely,*
*MAGNUS K. MOODIE,*

*Edinburgh.*

# Colemanballs

*£10 paid for contributions*

*"These cornerstones were the centre of the Chancellor's policy."*
**GORDON BROWN, Radio 4**
**(J.R. Cook)**

*"We have got to all work together in the national interest and get away from the everyday bump and grind of politics."*
**PADDY ASHDOWN, Radio 4**
**(J.R. Cook)**

**Disc Jockey:** *What type of gun was a Gatling Gun?*
**Contestant:** *A sword.*
**LBC Radio**
**(John J. Friary)**

*"It must have been a slow puncture because it went down slowly."*
**NIGEL MANSELL, BBC2**
**(Christian Santo)**

*"When I say 'we' I mean it in the royal sense as there are quite a few of us here in the studio."*
**DAVE LEE TRAVIS, Radio 1**
**(J. Simpson)**

# HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN

## Letter from the **Dominican Republic**

*from Our Own Correspondent*

**"THE LIGHTS can be seen 90 nautical miles from here," exclaims the engineer-guide with an expansive wave of the hand. "And upwards? Well we say it will light the face of God."**

It's a shame we can't address the bills to the Almighty. Some estimates put the cost of the celebrations to mark the 500th anniversary of Columbus's arrival in the Americas here at US$400 million over the past 10 years. There must be cheaper ways to go bankrupt.

For all that we have the world's grandest mausoleum: a huge recumbent cross structure sporting 147 rooftop spotlights designed to form a "cross of light" on passing clouds. Except, as you might expect here, there are a few minor problems.

First, you'd be right to expect a Caribbean island promoted for its sun, sand and not a little of the other, not to have much cloud. Second, the supposed remains of Columbus, being transferred from Santo Domingo's cathedral this week, are almost certainly not his (animal bones is one guess). Third, with power cuts of up to 10 hours a day, more than half the city has to be turned off to turn the Columbus lighthouse on. Fourth, even the most insensitive heads of state have begun to appreciate the liability of being seen to "celebrate" the disease, massacres and enslavement the great discoverer brought us.

Indeed, this must be the most expensive party to which no one is coming. Except, of course, the Almighty's representative himself. Step forward, His Holiness, the Pope. A neat bit of manoeuvring has added the addendum "...for the Evangelisation of the Americas" to the title of the celebrations. This rather original piece of public relations speak for the inquisition in the New World has brought the church on side, persuading it to give up its animal bone relics in the cathedral at the same time.

The whole scheme — straight out of the Latin American School of White Elephants — is the personal obsession of our mad president, 85-year old Joaquím Balaguer. As befits a man who served his political apprenticeship in the 1930s under Rafael Trujillo, the biggest *generalissimo* of them all, Balaguer sees himself as a man of destiny — destined to finish the lighthouse begun by his mentor.

A little electoral fraud in 1990 has ensured he still holds the reins of power in his arthritic hands in the crucial year, despite needing the arms of two generals when shuffling along and being virtually blind with glaucoma. Any day now and the mausoleum, looking more like a pyramid every day, could be Balaguer's own last resting place.

It could happen sooner than you think, even to an 85 year old. Incredibly all this has been done in the name of someone whose very mention is believed to carry a curse. Deference to the *focú* means that Dominicans refer to Columbus as the Great Admiral or Great Discoverer. Many famous Dominicans live in dread of being awarded the country's highest honour, the Confederacíon de Colon.

Everyone believes Balaguer's aim is to be buried alongside the man who might well be considered the continent's curse. Many are convinced the *focú* will strike — if not El Presidente himself, some aspect of the celebrations.

But then what could be more appropriate? A dictator sharing a mausoleum with animal bones he believes to be the remains of his hero staring up into the face of God (he insists he can still see bright lights) amid the ruins of the banana republic he bankrupted with his illusions.

Who says Gabriel García Marquez writes fiction?

# TRUE STORIES

CHRISTOPHER LOGUE

Illuminated by Bert Kitchen

**INTERVIEWED in the lobby of the Majestic Hotel, Mr John Carraway said: "Mr Anand Panyarachun, the Prime Minister of Thailand, was making a speech to 400 of us Australian travel agents about the advantages of Thai tourism when a monkey came through the window, snatched the speech out of his hand, then climbed the curtain rail over the stage and began to eat it. We couldn't stop laughing — so the monkey joined in, gibbering away, which made things worse for us, and finally it threw the pieces of paper into the air and went back out of the window."**

AFTER she had waited for 40 minutes to wave away Mr Mark Holder and Mr Colin Drury on their bicycle ride to Salzgitter, Swindon's twin town, Ms Middi Haines, the Mayor of Swindon, was informed that the cyclists had, in fact pedalled away four months ago, after leaving a message to this effect on the town hall's answering machine.

*REPLYING to a complaint made by the American Airline Pilots' Association about the dangers of flying aircraft with only two engines over the Pacific ocean, Mr Frank Fickeisen, Boeing's chief engineer, said: "When you have two engines, you have two engines that can fall to bits. When you have four, you have four that can fall to bits. The less engines you have, the safer you are."*

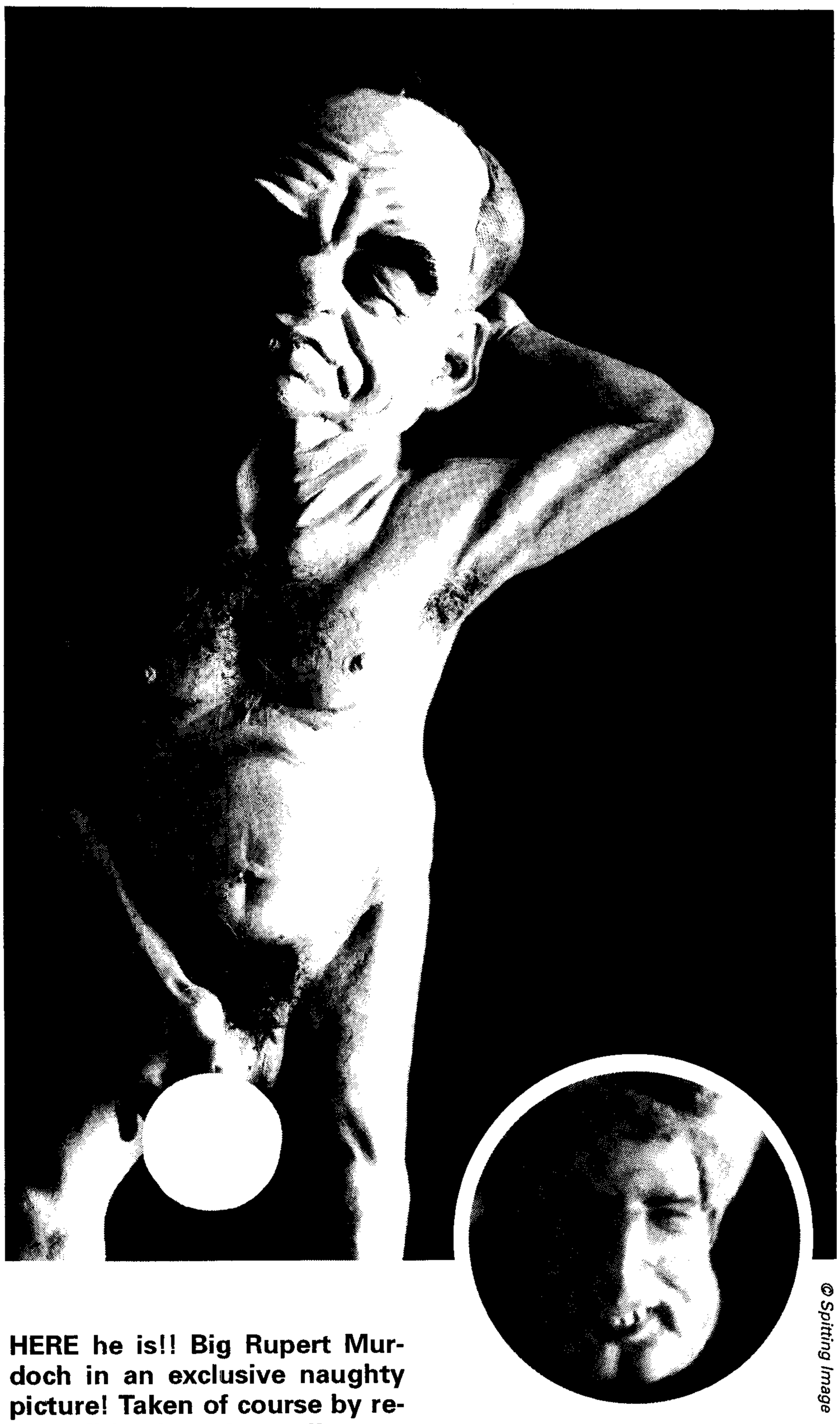
IN THEIR apology to Professor Edna Longley, the *Irish Times* said: "We recognise that the Professor did not say that the *Field Day Anthology of Irish Poetry* had *amplified* but had *simplified* the Northern Irish Literary Movement; that the anthology's editor had not included *ideological bullies*, as the Professor had said, but *ideological buddies* in the book's key sections; that they had printed the word *revisionism* when the Professor had said *counter*-revisionism; the term *hound of hell* should have been the term *hound of heaven*; and that the Professor's first name is not *Enda* but *Edna*."

*SPEAKING after the bride and groom had driven away on their windsurfing honeymoon, Mr Bruce Borders, a minister of the Peace For Truth Church and an Elvis Presley impersonator, said: "Angie and David Woods, as they now are, plus their guests and me, all took the plunge together. We assembled on the Jacksonville bungee tower and, as I finished singing 'Can't Help Falling In Love', we all jumped out into space tied to our bungee cords and yo-yoed up and down while I pronounced them man and wife."*

INFORMATION: Bangkok Post 29.7.92; Swindon Evening Advertiser 18.8.92; South China Morning Post 11.8.92; Irish Times 10.8.92; Arab News 20.8.92. MONITORS: George Kershaw, Anon, Andrew Sheppard, Donald Endurby, P.T. Mitchell.

# THE Sun DAY TIMES

## Page Three Fella!



© Spitting Image

**HERE he is!! Big Rupert Murdoch in an exclusive naughty picture! Taken of course by responsible photo-journalists acting in the pubic** *(shurely 'public'? Ed)* **interest!!**

**What's that he's holding?**

**"It's just a prick," says porn-again** *(shurely 'born-again'? Ed)* **Rupe. "I'm a hands-on proprietor." Well that's Andy!!! Brillo, sport!!**

# 'PEACE IN OUR TIME'

## Nation Rejoices as British Prime Minister Returns from Germany

A TIRED but triumphant Mr John Majorlain stepped off the plane today after his historic talks with the German Chancellor, Herr Kohl.

Holding aloft a ten-pound note, he declared, "I have in my hand a piece of paper. And it's completely worthless."

### A-Ten-Pees-ment

Mr Neville Major continued: "There will be no war of words with Germany. I have spoken to Herr Kohl, who has promised me that the Bundesbank will not invade any other currencies until they feel like it."

Waiting crowds at the airport jeered wildly as Mr Majorlain pledged a new era of cooperation. "Herr Kohler will do what he likes and we will cooperate."

The pound is 2.173 DM.

***YES! IT'S THE OUTRAGEOUS NEW STRIP FROM BRITAIN'S TOP COMICS***

UZ
BY "CUTTER" PERKINS
AND RGJ
4
WE'RE AAL IN THE SHITE 'CAUSE A THE ANTICS A WOR BAIRNS::
AYE, PET, WE'S AAL GONNA BE OOT ON WORS ARSES WI' NOWT TE DE!
REALLY USELESS
GISSA JOB
THE PARAS
I'M GOOD AT THAT, ME!
I CAN LET YEZ HAVE A COUPLE A POOND TILL SAT'DAY - BUT I WANNIT BACK!
GAS
MILK
BOOZE
CORAL'S
MILL'S
AYE, AN' WOR SNIFFA'S GORRA GI' UP THE MERC AN' BUY BRITISH.
SO WHA'S SHE HAVIN'? A NISSAN? TOYOTA? PEUGEOT?
OR MEBBE A FOUR WHEEL DRIVE FER THE 'FARMING'?
WHY DIVVENT YA BUNG ONE'S FAT SLAG THE MERC? SHE LIKES A FREE RIDE!
I LIKE ANYTHIN', ME, SO LONG AS IT'S GOT PLENTY A POKE AN' PINS ME TE THE SEAT!
THRCB!
LISSEN! THEY'RE MAKIN' A FILM ABOOT WOR SNIFFA! SQUIDGY-THE MOVIE!
THAT'S SICK!!
REALLY YOUTHFUL
GAZZZZZA
DAILY BREAD
MAJOR SCREWS UP
BUT ISN'T JOHN SMITH BALD?
LAZZZZZIO
SNIFF!
SNIFF!
SITS VAC
AYE! LOADS OF IT!
WHY DIVVENT I NAFFIN' QUALIFY FER YER NEW NAFFIN' CIVIL LIST, THEN?
COZ YE CANNAE BE CIVIL TE NEEONE YA BIG GOB A SHITE!

BEGINNING TODAY

# THE LAWSON MEMOIRS

*The man described by himself as "The Most Brilliant Chancellor Ever" looks back at his years in office and describes just how brilliant he was.*

### Part One: I was Terrifically Brilliant

I shall never forget the day when I told Mrs Thatcher just how brilliant I was. It was in a cabinet meeting and she turned to me and said "I think we should give in to Arthur Scargill." This was typical of her "give-in" approach to everything: the Unions, Europe and the Argentinians.

Fortunately for her, I was there to give her some backbone and come up with the brilliant ideas needed to save the country.

*TOMORROW: How I could easily have been Prime Minister but I couldn't be bothered.*

## Lawson's Sensational Verdicts

***Mrs Thatcher:*** *"Weak, vacillating, not as good as me."*

***Norman Tebbit:*** *"Shy, weak, ineffectual. Not as good as me."*

***Geoffrey Howe:*** *"Tough, decisive, combative. But still not as good as me."*

***Bernard Ingham:*** *"Bastard."*

# Those Kuwaiti Elections in full

**Kuwait (Central)**
No change
*100% Turnout (All 3 people voted)*
**His Royal Highness Prince Box-wallah al-Sabbatical** (Emir al-Sabbatical's Royalist Democratic Fascist Dictatorship United Alliance For a Palestinian-Free Kuwait) 3 votes
**Masif al-Bedoon** (Opposition Party) 0 votes.

*Mr Bedoon has sadly disappeared. Obituary — page 94.*



## TOP TEN YORKSHIRE BORES

| This Week | | Last Week | Weeks On List |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Sir Marcus Fox MP | 1 | 14 |
| 2 | Geoffrey Boycott | 5 | 8961 |
| 3 | Michael Parkinson | 10 | 10,860 |
| 4 | Roy Hattersley | 7 | 15,221 |
| 5 | Alan Bennett | 3 | 18,612 |
| 6 | David Hockney | 9 | 21,217 |
| 7 | Fred Trueman | 2 | 22,612 |
| 8 | Bernard Ingham | – | 5 years |
| 9 | Tony Harrison | – | – |
| 10 | The late J.B. Priestley | – | 80 years |

This week's Bores compiled with the help of the Jorvik Viking Centre, York

# That Brighton Tory Conference Grand Hotel All-Day Breakfast Menu in full

*Kellogg's All-Over Bran*
*Two Fishfingers à la Delors*
*Banana skins*

— ❋ —

*Welsh Tebbit*

— ❋ —

*Little English Breakfast*
*(with scrambled egg on face)*

— ❋ —

*No toast (with Bitter and Orange Mellorlade)*

***To Drink:***
*Peter Brook-Bond's PG Tips*
*Café Old Hag (poss. Mrs Thatcher)*

*[William Cash not accepted]*


ADVERTISEMENT

DON'T CARRY ON MAJOR!

A new British farce with all the old favourites — the Prime Minister, the Chancellor, the Conservative Party and the whole comic crew!

**Cast in Full**

John Major — Julian Clary
Mr Lamont — Les Dawson
Norma Major — Maureen Lipman
Michael Heseltine — Rick Mayall
Douglas Hurd — Stephen Fry
Michael Portillo — Tony Slattery
Edward Heath — Norman Wisdom
Margaret Thatcher — Barry Humphries

*Now showing at the following towns:*

**BRIGHTON**

# The Secret Diary of John Major aged 47¾

## Monday

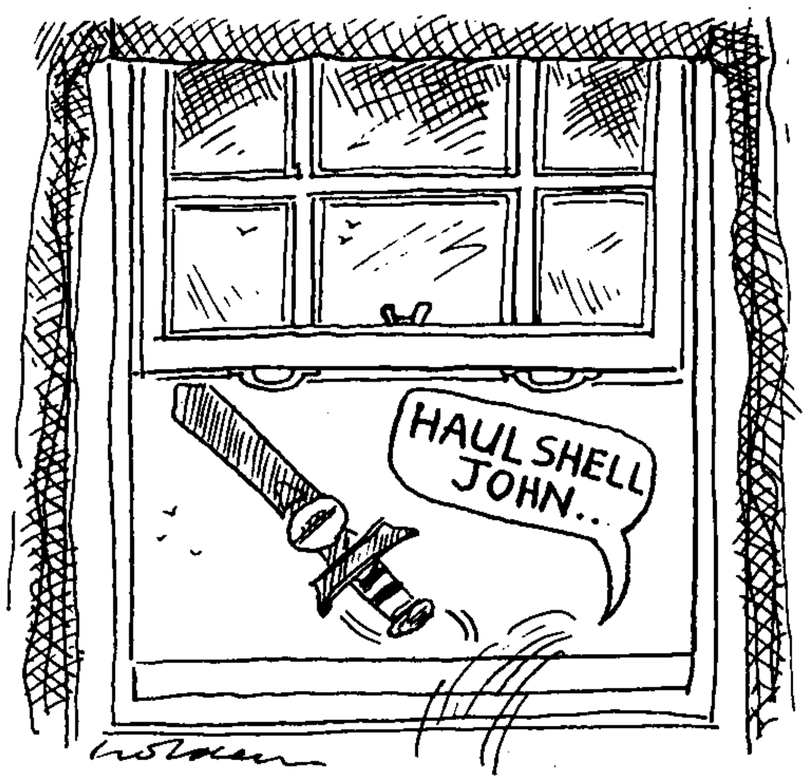
I am in no small measure pleased by the way things have turned out. Now that we have left the ERM, all our problems seem to be over, and we can now get down to planning how we can get back in again. When I mentioned this to Mr Lamont he climbed into the fridge, and refused to come out for a considerable number of minutes.

While I was trying to coax him out, the postman brought a very sad letter from my ex-friend David Mellor. "Dear John," it began, "I'm afraid I have decided that I cannot go on. This is entirely my own decision, as I discovered when I had a call this morning from Sir Marcus Fox, telling me to clear my desk. I am very sorry about this, John. It is entirely my own fault. I have brought it on myself. There is no one to blame except the press. I know I will be a terrific loss to you, and we will no longer be able to spend our Saturday afternoons being photographed together watching Chelsea."

I read this out to Norma through the fridge door, and he came out laughing in a rather funny way, like Herbert Lom in the Pink Panther films. "It was all my fault," he shouted, with a number of ice-cubes stuck to his eyebrows. "I blame the Germans."

## Tuesday

I have been up a half the night working out who I could give my old friend David's job to. Everyone I could think of had a job, even Mr Waldegrave. However, while I was still considering this considerably important consideration, Mr Lamont rushed into my office wearing a Ninja Turtle outfit shouting "Yo, dude — have you seen the latest unemployment figures? And the pound has just gone through the 2.40 barrier. Cowabunga!" With this he leaped out of the window, where he fell on top of my new friend Mr Waldegrave, who was just bringing round a list of the winners in my great Daily Telegraph Citizens Charter Competition. At least Mr Waldegrave is trying to get on with doing something constructive to help the country, instead of sitting round and blaming the whole of this mess we're in on the Germans.




## Wednesday

I blame the Germans. Mr Hurd has shown me his Top Secret file which proves that the Germans have been going round trying to undermine me, by saying that I am no good at my job. As Mr Hurd says: "This is a terrible breach of confidence."

This afternoon we had our big debate on the economy in the House of Commons, which we had all come back from our holidays for. It was my job to explain that Norma and I were in control of the situation, and that everyone could now have complete confidence in our ability to run the economy. When I said all this to the MPs they listened very carefully in deferential silence.

Then Mr Smith made his long-awaited debut which in my judgement fell very considerably flat. Everything he said, they just laughed at, even our side.

The only other good speech, apart from mine, was Mr Heath's who said that I had been doing a good job, and that it all went to show that Mrs Thatcher was totally wrong about everything.

While I was listening to his speech, I looked round the back benches and saw Mr Brooke, who used to work in Northern Ireland. I at once had one of my brilliant ideas. Why didn't I give him Mr Mellor's job, since he likes singing so much and also cricket.

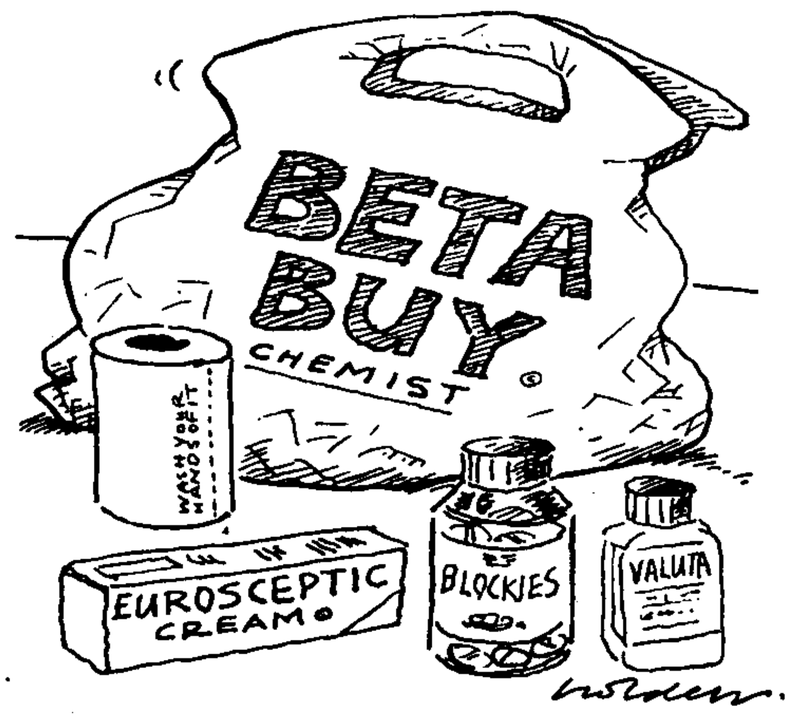
## Thursday

This morning Mr Lamont came in smiling and looking very considerably calm. "I've had 70 Beta-blockers for breakfast," he said. This must be a new type of cereal, not dissimilar to my own Weetabix. "Good news, prime minister," he said. "The pound cannot fall any further. It is now worth nothing." I am glad he is being more positive. I then told him my good news. After the great success of my 5p coin, which people call the Major because it is so useful, I have now brought in a new 10p piece. "Why don't we call it 'the pound'?" said Mr Heseltine. He has been in surprisingly high spirits of late.

## Friday

Now that I have solved the economic crisis, I can turn my energies to foreign policy. Mr Kohl and M. Mitterand have told me that I must hurry up and agree to the Maastricht treaty. I told them that there was no problem as I do agree with it. The trouble is that no one else in the Conservative party does. "What you need is a strong man to lick them into shape," said Mr Kohl. "Someone like Mrs Thatcher."

I did not understand what he meant, since everyone knows that Mrs Thatcher is against the Treaty. The Germans have no sense of humour.




The Secret Diary of John Major — the book, now on sale at £4.99

## Saturday

This morning's paper is full of Mr Lawson's memoirs, which are in no small measure extremely interesting. He says for example that Mrs Thatcher was a very bad Prime Minister who constantly got things wrong, like taking Britain into the ERM. This needed saying. Oh yes.

Unfortunately my wife Norman has torn out one of the pages, headed "My verdict on Major" so I was unable to read it. Norman said that she needed the page to send off for their fashion offer of a pair of Gucci green wellingtons. She told me, however, that Mr Lawson's appraisal of me had actually been very kind considering everything that has happened. He was clearly a very good chancellor, unlike some of his successors!

## Sunday

It is time for me to prepare for the Conference. Everyone is worried about Mrs Thatcher making a speech. Obviously they are concerned that she will make a fool of herself, which will damage the party. My theme is "The Way Ahead". I told this to my friend Mr Heseltine when we arrived at the hotel in Brighton. "It's over there," he said, pointing to the Emergency Exit. Everyone laughed — which shows that we are all in high spirits, contrary to what the papers are saying.

## Monday

Mr O'Donnell tells me that there has been a new poll of my popularity. "You've finally beaten Mrs Thatcher," he said. "She never had a score like this." He didn't show it to me, however, as he realised I was busy on my speech, which will silence everyone. "I bet it will," said Norman when I showed it to her later.

## Tuesday

Jeffrey Archer has sent me yet another synopsis of his new book, "Bowman Takes Charge". In the latest version the Prime Minister James Colonel is forced to resign at the party conference along with Chancellor Norris Lapont. Lord Bowman immediately renounces his peerage to contest the leadership. He fights Mark Brilliantine, the dashing President of the Board of Trade. And wins. The Brilliantine character is excellent and reminds me of someone though I cannot quite think who it is.

# BRITAIN IN CRISIS

## SMALL FIRMS GO TO WALL AS SLUMP BITES

**PART 94** THIS week we look at a small family business, operating out of Windsor, which is facing the worst crisis of its 1,000-year history.

The events of the last two years have hit the firm badly, and there is now talk of job losses, or even that the firm may have to close down altogether.

The managing director, **Mrs Brenda Queen**, 67, told me "We just don't know how we're going to keep going. We've already laid off Mr Phillips and the new girl, Fergie. But the redundancy payments are crippling."

Back in the 80s the firm of Windsor and Co. enjoyed a boom time, with such best-selling products as *Royal Wedding* and *Royal Wedding II*. "We were taking on new staff all over the place," says Greek-born Mr Queen, a retired naval officer, who works part-time behind the scenes in a non-consultant role.

"We worked our guts out to give the public what they wanted. And now the Government is threatening to take away our subsidy. All we've got left to live on is £56 billion."

Meanwhile there are plans to close down the firm's Kent and Gloucester branches altogether.

The knock-on effects if the firm is finally forced to shut up shop will be disastrous. A spokesman for the drivel-writing industry, Lady Antonia Holden-Guest, author of the best-selling *Prince Charles Is My Best Friend Even Though I've Never Met Him*, said last night "It would be little short of tragedy. Millions depend for our livelihood on this small business. Without it, there would be no more newspapers, no more books and no more *Hello* magazine."

# SMITH TRIUMPH

## New Labour Leader Wins Sleeping Ovation

by Our Men in Blackpool **Lunchtime O'Snooze and Alan Wat-day-is-it**

**LABOUR'S new leader Mr John Major** *(shurely 'Smith'? Ed)* **yesterday confounded his critics by putting them to sleep with an hour-long speech that will not be remembered for years to come.**

No one had ever thought that Mr Smith could be so dull. But once again he proved them wrong.

Speaking in a low Scottish monotone, Smith pledged a new-look Labour Party for the '90s, with its exciting, get-up-and-go-to-sleep slogan "Active Government".

### Mr Smith Goes To Sleep

In a visceral, blistering, blisceral attack on Mr John Major, Smith said he was "nothing but a nonentity in a suit, with glasses, who looks like a provincial bank manager".

As for Mr Lamont, the Labour leader went on, "there is only one word to describe him — Lamontable".

This sally brought one or two titters from his daughters, who were strategically placed on the platform to show that Mr Smith is a believer in family values and is in no sense a homosexual — even though he favours "closer links" with trade union leaders.

### Going For Gould

Perhaps Mr Smith's most brilliantly dull moment came when he turned his attention to the crisis over the ERM, which he compared to the achievements back in the '50s of the BRM, or British Racing Motor. "I expect some of you are old enough to remember Stirling Moss," he said, "but now we are faced with a Sterling Loss."

Then Mr Smith turned his fire back on the Prime Minister and his Chancellor. He described the two of them as being like those famous comedians the Three Stooges — "even though", he added, "there are only two of them".

Mr Smith concluded his speech by outlining to delegates his vision of a new Britain, in which there would be a Labour government with himself as Prime Minister.

Delegates responded with a sleeping ovation that lasted a record 40 minutes, until Deputy Leader Miss Margaret Beckett told them they could all go home.

*"Your usual table?"*

*"Oh, who knows — I try to steer clear of office politics"*

## PETER McLIE

## The World's Worst Columnist

HAVE you noticed a strange thing about people? As the years go by their appearance changes.

Whe I first saw her on TV at the time of the Coronation, The Queen was a smiling young lassie, with a sparkle in her eye and a crown on her head.

But now she looks quite old, with a lined face and spectacles.

And men are no exception. Take the Duke of Edinburgh. He looks completely different now to the way he once did.

Am I the only person to have noticed this?

☐ **WHATEVER happened to Michael Caine? You don't hear much of him these days.**

**And yet I remember him being quite superb in** *Mary Poppins*, **singing** *Climb Every Mountain* **as though to manner born.**

**Today no one remembers him. That's showbusiness, folks!**

☐ *ISN'T it scandalous the way Mr David Mellor clings to office, like a drowned rat clinging to a sinking ship.*

*Despite everything that has been printed about him, he still sits there on our television screens, smiling away like a Cheshire cheese!*

*Isn't it time his friend John Major had a word with him?*

☐ **HAVE you noticed how some people in this world have nothing whatever to say?**

**And yet they still insist on saying it. Usually at great length.**

**And often such people repeat themselves — even though they had nothing to say in the first place.**

**Either that, or they point out something that was perfectly obvious to everyone already.**

**Funny old world, isn't it? Isn't life grand?**

*(You're fired, Ed.)*

# POETRY CORNER

## Lines Written On The 35th Anniversary Of The *Which?* Magazine

So. Farewell then
*Which?* Magazine.

You are 35 years old
This week.

Keith did
A test on you
Once.

He found that you were
Not worth reading
And that other
magazines were
Better value for money.

E.g. *Viz*.

E.J. Viz (17½)

19-20 October
**TV Survivor's Guide to the 90s**
Royal Lancaster Hotel, London, W2
The Royal Television Society's Autumn Symposium will address the urgent issues facing the British television industry. The Rt Hon David Mellor QC MP will give the opening address.
Contact: 071-387 1970.

*I.V.C.A. newsletter*

## Great Bores Of Today.

"... I didn't think it would be any good at first but I have to say I rather like it Radio Three's all very well but which of us has got time especially in the morning to listen to whole symphonies by Stravinsky or whoever I mean we've got them all on CD already what's good about it is you get such a nice mixture for instance when I was driving Roland to the station we had guitar music which was very nice Chopin and Kiri Te Kanawa singing *Summertime* with Simon Rattle and the adverts don't jar too much and reception is really good all over the country apparently they have little FM booster thingies everywhere Roland knows all about it I know the Irish chap's not much good and he can't pronounce the names but it's the music that counts and it *is* classic in the real sense and you don't have any of that boring cricket ha ha ha the other evening on the way back from the station we had that one which used to be an advert for British Rail how did it go? la la la la la la la no I love it..."

Celeb

LIGGER

MY STAY IN THAT MONASTERY DID ME A POWER OF GOOD. I'D RECOMMEND IT TO ANY JADED STAR BORED WITH THE MUSIC BIZ.
IT TOOK ME 12 LONG WEEKS BUT I FINALLY FOUND MYSELF—A VERY UPLIFTING AND SATISFYING FEELING...
YOU CERTAINLY SEEM HAPPIER, GARY.
IT WAS BEAUTIFUL REDISCOVERING THE REAL GARY BLOKE AFTER THOSE RECENT MONTHS OF SELF DOUBT AND UNCERTAINTY.
SO WHAT EXACTLY HAPPENED?
BROKE ALL THE RULES AND GOT THROWN OUT OF COURSE. I FEEL TWENTY YEARS YOUNGER ALREADY
YOU OLD REBEL.

# KNACKER DEMANDS NUCLEAR WEAPONS

by Our Crime Staff **Inspector Morse and Constable Haywain**

**INSPECTOR "Knacker of the Yard" Knacker last night defended his controversial decision to arm London's police with mobile nuclear rocket launchers in a bid to curb the capital's exploding crime wave.**

"My lads are expected to go on the streets and arrest innocent Irishmen with only their bare hands," he said. "But now at least they stand a chance. The criminal will think twice about taking on one of my officers armed with a 50-megaton nuclear device, capable of destroying not only him but his entire community."

Knacker further defended his decision to keep the new weapons secret, on the grounds that to publicise the latest escalation of the war against crime might produce "negative feedback" from people who do not want to be killed.

Inspector Coleman-Knacker is being transferred to head the crack Wheel Clamping Squad.

THE TIMES FRIDAY OCTOBER 9 1992

## NEW WORDS

**BRAGG**
**n. (regional slang, orig. fr. Cumbria and Hampstead); the act of sexual congress between a middle-aged man and a much younger woman. Example: " 'appen tha's a feisty lass. Fancy a bragg?" (from *The Crystal Balls* by Melvyn Bonk).**

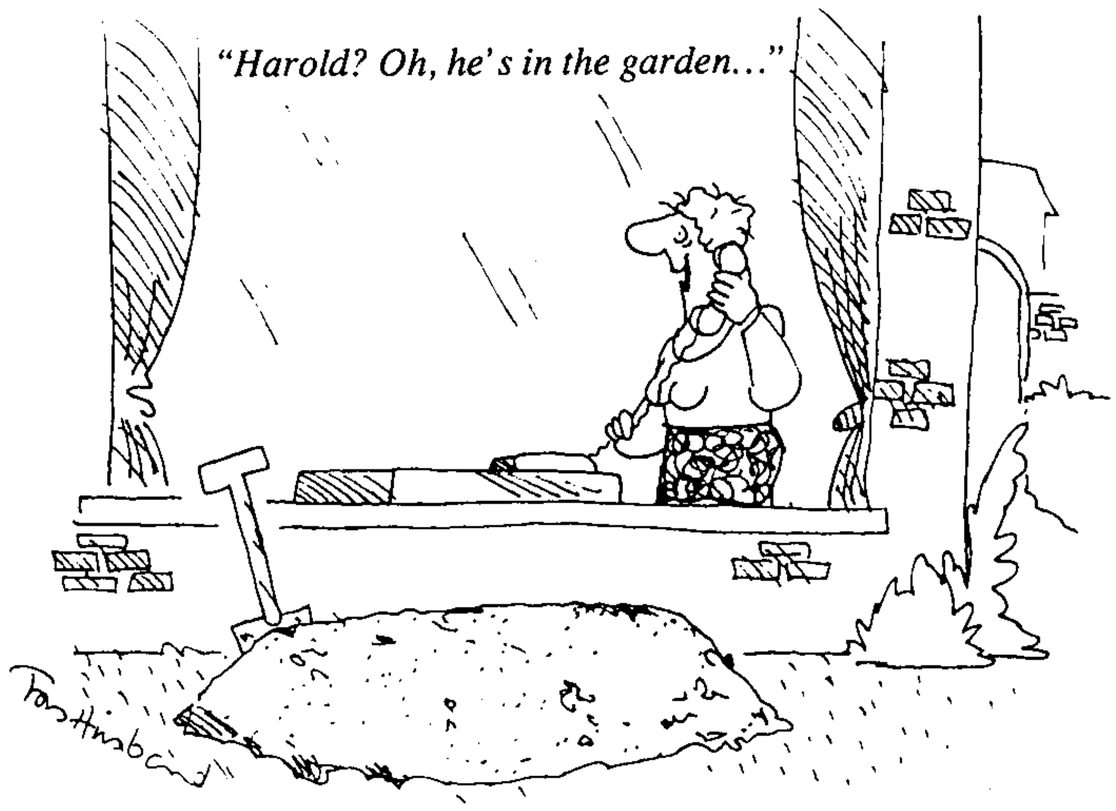
**PAXMAN**
**n. a superior, supercilious sort of person. One who cannot speak without sneering, as in: "Did you see that bloody paxman last night? The poor Croatian deputy-foreign minister couldn't get a word in edgeways."**

**FERGIE**
**n. a fleeting, inconsequential sexual relationship, as in: "It wasn't a big deal, it was just a fergie." (prob. derived from Anglo-Saxon verb "to ferg", cogn. with Old French "bonque").**

**STOTHARD**
**n. a stop-gap; time-server; Buggins; uninspired choice for post (as in "I don't know — perhaps we should give the job to Stothard").**

He denied the promotion was as a result of the affair.
"I put her through a series of on-the-job tests to see if she was suitable

*Daily Telegraph*




*World of Soccer*

# HARDMAN SLAMMED OVER TV FOOTBALL

**by D.G. Adio**

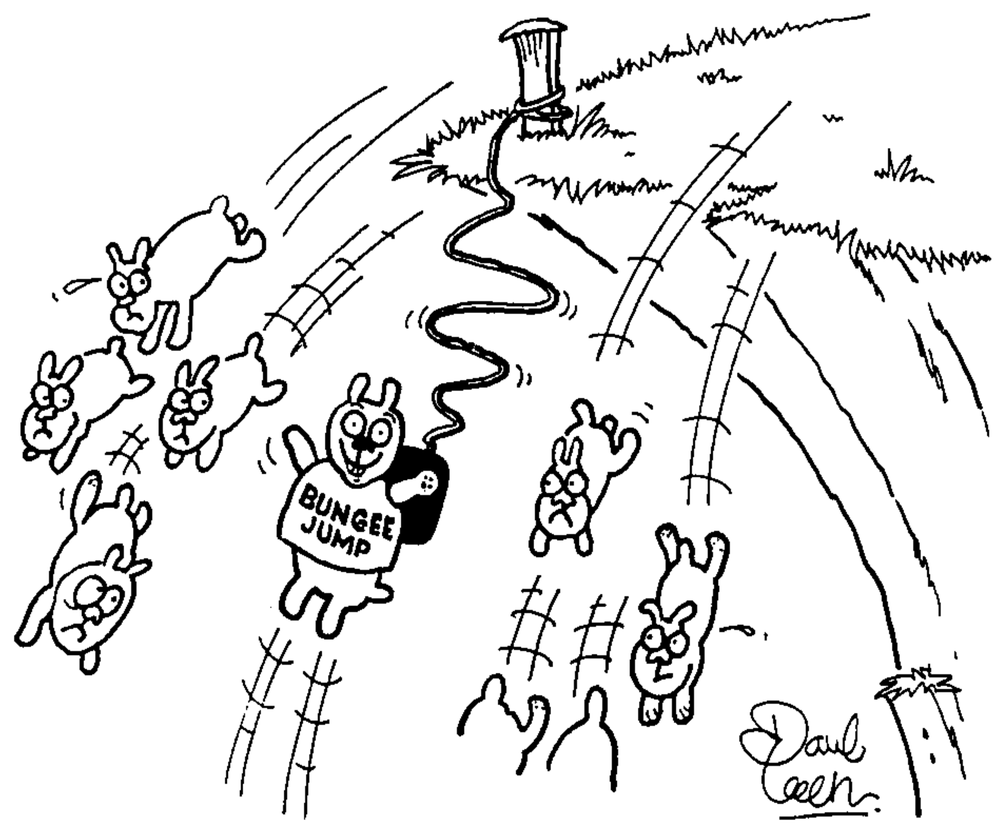
**The Football Association was rocked to its foundations today after discovering that the notorious hardman "Vinny" Birt was planning to put out a collection of his foul play under the title "BBC Football in Association with BSkyB".**

"It's a disgusting attempt to cash in on the unpleasant side of football — i.e. doing the dirty with Sky," said one spokesman.

Birt, however, defended himself. "It's all part of today's game," he said. "You've got to put the boot into ITV when no one's watching. And now no one's watching football at all."

### LATE SHOW SCORE

| | |
|---|---|
| Waldemar Januscak | 3 viewers |
| Sarah Dunant | 0 |



# GERMAN V-SIGN CELEBRATIONS NOT TO GO AHEAD

*by Our Euro-Staff* **Robert "Bomber" Harris**

**A STORM of outrage in all parts of Britain has greeted the news that the German government is to erect a massive 3,000-foot high "V-sign" to commemorate the destruction of the Pound.**

It is now almost exactly two weeks since the much-vaunted Pound Sterling came under a blitzkrieg assault from the massed armadas of the dreaded Bundesbanktodtsbattalienen.

### All Quiet On The NatWest Front

Said one British veteran of those dramatic few hours in the autumn of 1992:

"How could those beastly Germans be so insensitive to the feelings of those of us who lost everything during the Battle of the Pound? Thousands of jobs were wiped out in the course of a single afternoon, as those Boche bankers launched their dreaded V-Sign at London. We were quite defenceless. We surrendered immediately."

But from Germany last night, where the champagne was still flowing in the streets, one jubilant bomber shouted out: "Today England, tomorrow the World Bank."

Potentially the greatest benefits, however, are the least visible ones. Under the country structure, the territories that were most successful tended to be the ones that expanded the most, while those where penetration was lower stayed small.

*Report on Tambrands (makes of Tampax) in Independent Business Section*

## TV HIGHLIGHTS

### *What you were lucky to miss...*

**Channel 4 7.00 am**

**The Big Focking Breakfast Show with "Sir" Bob Fockoff and Appaulla Yates**

**FOCKOFF:** Who the fock are you?

**FAMOUS AUSTRALIAN POLITICIAN** *(for it is who he?)*: I'm your guest.

**"SIR" BOB:** Well, fock off then.

*(Cut to Appaulla in bed with Michael Fishfinger)*

**YATES:** And now the weather...

*(Glove-puppet of giraffe wanders onto set and reads out top 100 shares on Nikkei Index... Audience [one bored teenager who thought it was 7.00 at night, due to overdose of Ecstasy] switches off)*

**BBC2 8.30 pm**

**Bored To Near-Death**

Cartoonist Gerald Scarfe is let loose with a camera yet again — this time to explore the phenomenon of the "bored to near-death experience" suffered by people who have to watch absurd, self-indulgent programmes made by Gerald Scarfe.

*The Biggest Thing To Hit Sunday Journalism Since Michael Ignatieff!*

That New Richard Ingrams *Observer* Column In Full

**1.** Down with the poofs.

**2.** Up with the IRA.

**3.** Er...

**4.** That's it.

*Reprinted by kind permission of The Oldie.*

*"Been out 'male-bonding' have we, sir?"*

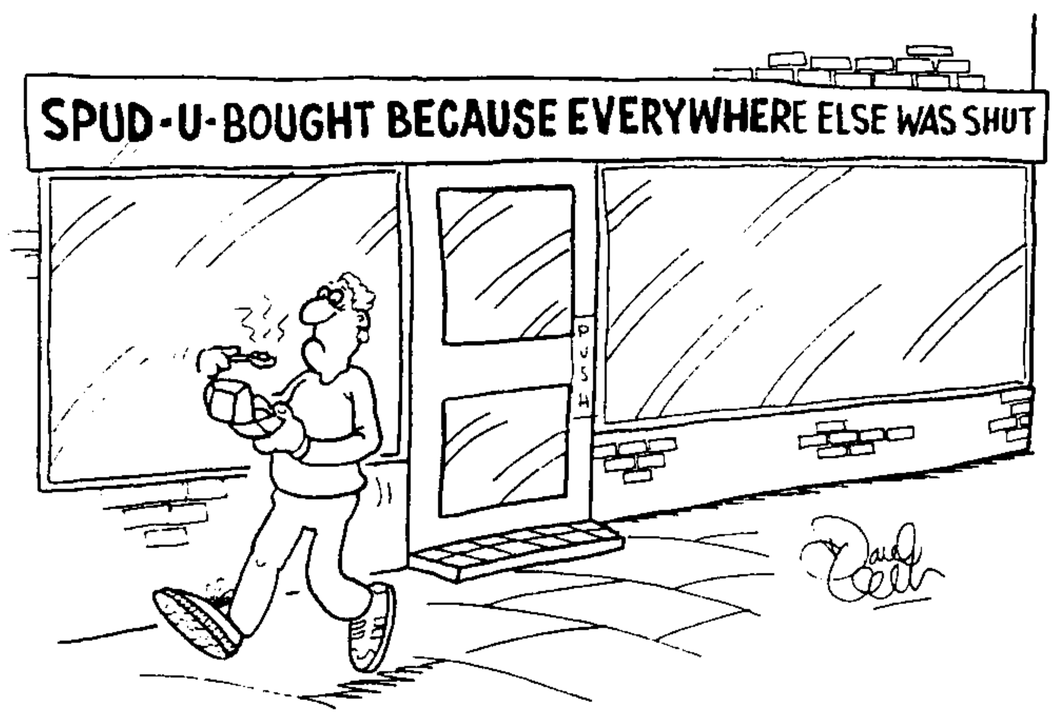
## Wedding of the Century

**Nigel Lawson**

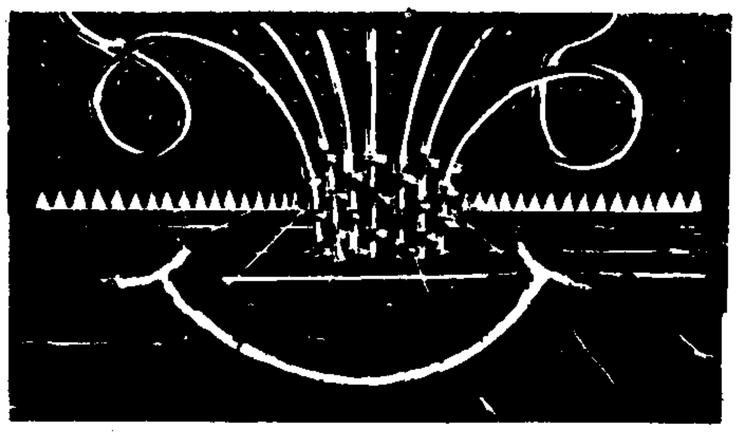
How they are related

**Ann Diamond**

| | |
|---|---|
| Sir Fatty de Lawson | Diamond Lil |
| Sir Dominic de Lawson | "Legs" Diamond |
| Jacques de Lorson | Gerald Ratner |
| Mark Lawson | Roland Ratner |
| Pamella Bawson | Princess Di-amond |
| Nigella Havers | John Drummond |
| **Nutella Lawson** | **Neil Diamond** |



# DIARY



## MICHAEL CAINE

The Sixties. Streuth! There was a decade and a half. Talk about never a dull moment. You could have blown me down with a feather. The Beatles were playing, David Bailey was taking pictures of dolly birds, brassieres were discarded — and sometimes, I'm happy to say, within close proximity of yours truly! — and London was alive with a new hungry, classless generation, overturning the citadels of the tired old snobs and aristos in their traditional positions of power. By the end of that amazing decade, the so-called toffs had been forced to admit us to their restaurants, their clubs, their posh Ascot enclosures — and even into their stately homes! I count myself lucky to have played a leading role in that revolution.

How long ago that seems now, mate. Blimey, you only have to look at this country at the present time to see that it's going to the old bow-wows. They're letting anyone into the restaurants, the clubs are full of riff-raff and the enclosures at Ascot are jammed with folk who haven't the foggiest how to behave. And you can't be a private guest in a stately home no more without every Tom, Dick and Harry paying his two quid to take a gander. Whatever happened to the old standards, I ask myself?

*Not a lot of people know that! (1):* The Great British Banger is in fact not a banger at all: it's a sausage!

What a lovely, warm human being Her Royal Majesty Her Highness the Queen Elizabeth the Queen is. And what a smashing sense of humour. Take it from me — the lady's a natural.

Tell you what. When I was living in Los Angeles, I became a sort of unpaid British social ambassador whenever royalty paid a call. Margaret, Phil, Charlie, Andy, Lilibet — they used to make a bee-line for my Beverley Hills mansion whenever they found themselves in LA. I suppose they knew that there they would find an ordinary, British bloke, a plain-speaking sort of feller who didn't go in for arse-licking and all that how's-your-father and would treat them as equals.

On the Queen's first visit to LA back in the early 70s, I sat two away from her at an official dinner. She struck me straight off as an extremely self-possessed young woman, but I could tell that she fancied me something rotten. It was written all over her face.

She's not a bad looker herself, but I had the distinct feeling she was the kind of girl who, having given herself, would be somewhat hard to persuade to take herself back, if you know what I mean.

It wasn't until the beginning of the meat course that our eyes met. I could tell she had the hots for me by the way she acted so reserved, so standoffish — a sure sign, as any bloke who's been around a bit will tell you. And then she spoke to me. "Mr Caine," she said, "I believe you live somewhere near here."

"Oy, oy, watch it, Michael, my lad," I said to myself. "She's gunning for a bit of the other, if you know what I mean — and she's a married lady!"

I tried to let her down gently. "Yes, ma'am," I replied — mutual friends had tipped me off that she loved to be called ma'am — "my WIFE and myself live very close to here."

The poor love looked a little taken aback. No, Michael, she's not a girl to be given the old heave-ho that easy, I thought to myself. Sure enough, she came back with the old one-two. "That," she sighed, "must be... lovely!"

Well, to cut a long story short, I managed to wheedle my way out of what I call "greater intimacy", and I'm glad to say that the two of us have been firm friends ever since. As I say, there's no denying she's one helluva classy bird — but, sorry, sweetheart, I'm a happily married man, Royal Highness or not!

*Not a lot of people know that! (2):* Dolphins are highly intelligent creatures. When still very young, they can swim quite long distances.

Let's talk cars. For too long, Britain has been class-ridden in its approach to the old broom-brooms, with the toffs and so-called upper classes choosing big, expensive cars simply so's they can rub them in the noses of the working classes.

What a lot of baloney, if you'll pardon my French. For me, a car is just a vehicle for carrying you from A to B. None of your fancy-pants stuff. And I'm fed up to the back teeth with all this hoity-toity upper-class showing off.

That's why, the minute I could afford one, I went out and bought myself a beautiful Rolls Royce from one of London's top dealers, recommended to me by my old friend Lord Hanson.

The old Roller is a highly professional and reliable vehicle, comfy too, and it gets you from A to B like nobody's business. And, contrary to popular belief, it's not a toffee-nosed car at all: no way. In fact, I was initially attracted to it because the angel motif on the front reminded me of another angel. Yes, I'm talking about my lovely old mum who used to live in a two-up, two-down in Tooting. And — not a lot of people know this — my lovely old mum didn't even have an inside toilet. So let those who are motivated by class-ridden envy of my car(s) put that in their pipe and smoke it.

*Not a lot of people know that! (3):* If you placed all the spaghetti that is eaten ON ANY SINGLE DAY end to end it would be literally hundreds of yards long!

On a more serious note, I'd like to pay tribute here to my old friend and business partner, the late Peter Langan. He had no business sense, he was a hopeless drunk, he couldn't handle women, he was abusive, a loafer, a has-been and an out-and-out pain-in-the-neck. All I can say is, crikey, he was lucky to have a friend like me, a major star who was always ready to stand by him through thick and thin, and to silently defend him against justified attacks from everyone else. I still miss him, blimey I do, but then that's the kind of bloke I am.

*Not a lot of people know that! (4):* In 1969, the American astronaut Neil Armstrong became the first man on the moon, a truly remarkable feat.

If there's one thing that gets on my wick it's name-droppers. I want to say to them, "Look, you're talking to a feller who's known all the big stars — Astaire, Bardot, Liz Taylor, Fergie, the lot. I mean, I've been very close, if you'll pardon my French, to some of the world's most beautiful creatures — Jane Fonda, Faye Dunaway, Julie Christie, Fergie. I've dined with Royalty, attended two Royal marriages and I'm proud to count Mrs Thatcher, Fergie and seventeen Peers of the Realm as close personal friends. But I don't feel the need to brag about it." So my message to any name-dropper is "give us a break, mate," as my very good friend the Duchess of York would put it, bless her.

*"You're thirty years old, son. High time you wrote a long piece bemoaning the current state of British pop music for one of the heavy Arts pages..."*

**The "Candidates on Television" listing yesterday misspelled the name of the Vice President in some editions. It is Quayle, not Quale. The Tmise regrets the error.**

*New York Times*

Die Serie moderner Sex-Skandale, an die sich die Briten gerne erinnern, begann in den permissiven sechziger Jahren mit der Profumo-Affäre. Dem Verteidigungsminister Harold Macmillan folgten Lord Lambton und die Thatcher-Günstlinge Devil Parkinson und Jeffrey Archer.

*Die Zeit*

# Literary Review

## Great Gores of Today

**Live From Golgotha**
Gore Vidal
*(Deutsch, £14.99)*

AT FIRST glance *Live from Golgotha*, a satire about modern time-travellers interfering with the events of the Crucifixion, seems an opportune assault on the current wave of loopy reinterpretations of the life of Jesus (cf A.N. Wislon etc).

All such new versions of the gospel story reshape the life of Christ, and so the validity of the direction that Christianity has taken, not on the basis of evidence (there isn't any) but merely according to contemporary taste.

Thus a male American feminist bishop, haply called Spong, believes that the Virgin Birth was a wicked cover-up of the rape of Mary, and that Jesus was married to the sadly misunderstood Mary Magdalen (*Born of a Woman — a Bishop Rethinks the Birth of Jesus*, Harper, £6.95). Barbara Thiering, an Australian ninny, has Jesus surviving the Crucifixion, going on to marry, fathering a family and retiring to the South of France, like Peter Mayle, to write His own gospels (*Jesus the Man*, Doubleday, £14.99).

And here comes Gore Vidal with a witty parody of these grabby new gospels? No. Here comes Gore Vidal imposing his own set of well-worn prejudices, just like the rest.

The narrator is Timothy, the recipient of two of Paul's epistles, writing as Bishop of Thessalonika in 96 AD. Initially he recollects the creation of the Church with St Paul (a businessman nicknamed "Saint"), who, for commercial reasons, has successfully presented Jesus as a Messiah for everyone, not just for the Jews. This being Vidal, Timothy and Saint are homosexual lovers, and Timothy opens by announcing: "I have golden hyacinthine curls and cornflower-blue, forget-me-not eyes and the largest dick in our part of Asia Minor." Foreskin jokes follow.

The plot is tedious and complicated: about rival time-travellers trying, retrospectively, to use Timothy to change the version of the story of Jesus that gets handed down over the centuries to our time. At the end of the twentieth century, a mysterious figure called the Hacker has started (somehow Vidal can't be bothered to explain) eliminating all records of the Jesus transmitted by Paul, so as to show Jesus to have been purely a Jewish messiah.

Later it emerges that the Hacker's name is Marvin Wasserstein ("thirty-something... a lot of acne scars, but otherwise he's a sort of Al Pacino type"). Later still, it emerges that Marvin is none other than Jesus Himself, then as now a Zionist fanatic, who escaped the Crucifixion (substituting fatboy Judas) and time-travelled forward to the end of the twentieth century.

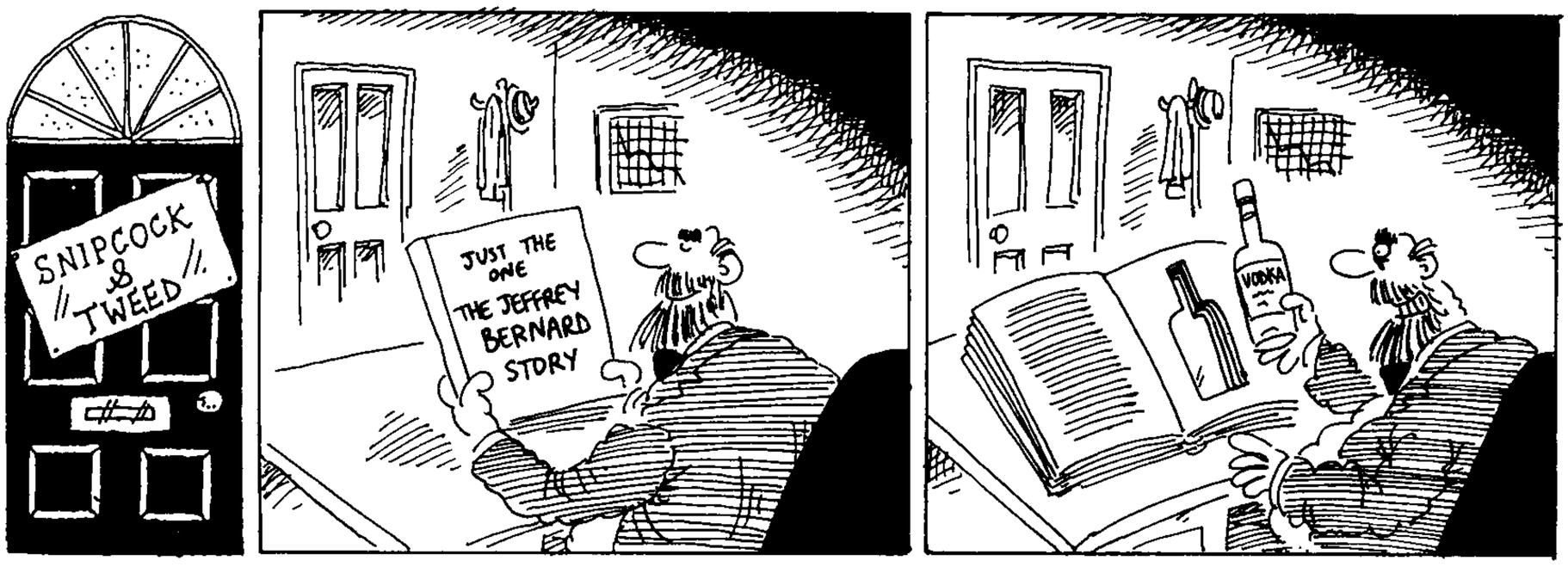
Part of his plan is to get the crucifixion of ridiculous Judas videoed by a time-travelling camera crew, in order to destroy the basis of Paul's Christianity for everybody. As a messianic Zionist, what he plans now that Israel has been re-established, is a nuclear Judgement Day in the year 2001 ("After Damascus, Baghdad, and Cairo are ablaze, I shall take out Berlin, Warsaw, Moscow and Pasadena...").

Serious biblical scholarship of recent times (eg, Geza Vermes, *Jesus the Jew*) has stressed that Jesus was in many ways a typical Jewish holy man of his time. Vidal has taken this perception and used it as a vehicle to caricature Zionism. They are terrorists now; so was Jesus then.

Timothy (a Greek, remember), having been made to realise this, comments: "If Jesus was *not* a Christian, as Saint Paul had taught, but just another run-of-the-mill Zionist terrorist, then I was all for doing him in right now". And he does. Aided by another visitor from the future, he travels back to 33 AD, and ensures that Jesus/Wasserstein does, after all, Himself die on the cross, so simultaneously averting Armageddon in 2001 and allowing Paul's beneficially falsified version of Christianity to survive down the centuries.

This is the Crucifixion that ends up being videoed — by the Japanese, the dreadful dominance of the yellow man being another of Vidal's tediously fixed ideas, along with the evil of the American empire, and the malignant effects of popular television.

The convoluted structure and silly camp jokes (the general effect is as if *Bill and Ted's Bogus Journey* had been scripted by Simon Raven at his worst) don't disguise the nastiness of the content. It's not that *Live from Golgotha* is blasphemous against Christianity — it has nothing to say about it. Like all recent rewritings of the Gospels it tells only about the writer's own self: in Vidal's case, a mixture of lubricity and affectation, prejudice and conceit.




## Books & Bookmen

■ IF THERE isn't a "biggest book" at the Frankfurt book fair — and this year there wasn't — one has to be invented.

A few years ago Sean Connery's autobiography was invented and sold. Last week it was hyped as Ben Elton's autobiography, but within minutes this was changed to Elton John's autobiography, said to be being auctioned by US agent Swifty Lazar.

Ben Elton John is said not even to have been told that the book has been created for him, but no doubt he'll be informed that the bidding reputedly reached £750,000. One other problem: Swifty Lazar was not at Frankfurt but in London.

Also not at Frankfurt but with publishers bidding to him on the European telephone was agent Michael Sissons, said to have sold Alan Clark's parliamentary diaries, much less indiscreet than anticipated, to Faber and Faber for £160,000.

Much hot air (and the air at the fair was often unbearably hot) was expended by UK publishers giving the nudge and wink that they had secured the next Jeffrey Archer novel, and the backlist to boot. Lord Archer's publisher, Hodder & Stoughton, was maintaining a stiff upper lip — and managed to sign up the well-known short story writer Edwina Currie for her first novel in return for £100,000.

Ian Chapman was refused admittance to the Dorling Kindersley stand which no one — not even Gunter Grass — was allowed to visit without an appointment. Chapperson, former head of Collins before it became HarpicCollins, was offered an appointment but declined the offer, modestly remarking that he was probably too common to tread on the great DK's boards.

John Potter of Reed International buttonholed publishers of all hues and sexes to show them porno pix from the Madonna book. It goes on sale for £25 at W H Smug at the end of the month and will be found on the one-handed reading material shelves.

Perhaps the most curious presence at the fair was that of two London lawyers, touting for a particular kind of business which is, they insisted, very much a growth industry: plagiarism. They seemed happy to act for either those plagiarised or those accused of plagiarism who would, of course, have to deny it. Read any good plagiarisms recently?

□ *MICHAEL HENSHAW, tax accountant to much of literary London, usually placates irate clients who grumble about his erratic methods by sending them bottles of wine from his vast cellar.*

*However, this traditional palliative seems unlikely to extricate him from his current spot of bother with the executors of the estate of the late Jean Rhys, author of The Wide Sargasso Sea.*

*Having failed to produce bank statements and tax records which are under his control, despite repeated requests, he has been removed as a trustee of the estate. The executors have also won a court order compelling him to produce all his Rhys-related documents. If he fails, Henshaw risks being jailed for contempt of court.*

*It may be pure coincidence, but Henshaw is currently trying to raise money by selling (at huge prices) some of his literary relics and first editions — including inscribed copies of plays by John Osborne, another client. Why does he need the money? The usual fiver is offered for further details.*

*'Bookworm'*

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

# Beyond our Ken?

**DOES last week's refusal by Kenneth Clarke to recommend a posthumous pardon for Derek Bentley — sentenced to death 40 years ago for not killing a policeman — give any clue to how the new home secretary will deal with the mountain of injustice cases piled up on his desk?**

Clarke's predecessor, Kenneth Baker, in knee-jerk reaction to the "disasters" of the Birmingham Six, the Maguires, the Guildford Four and the Broadwater Farm Three, referred everything that came near him to the court of appeal. Howls of anguish from the court itself (which will soon be hearing more "referred" appeals than ordinary ones), and strong pressure from the police have obliged Clarke, whom everyone wrongly thought was more liberal than Baker, to take a different line.

The police counterattack has been launched with amazing determination and coordination. In the course of a few days at the end of September a series of articles started to appear in the newspapers suggesting that the great injustice cases of the last few years were not injustices at all.

The *Sunday Telegraph* started the rot with an astonishing front page article, based entirely on a "leak" from the West Midlands that a new inquiry had suggested that the Birmingham Six had been guilty after all!

The report — which not a single fact, but a vast amount of innuendo and smear — somehow forgot to mention that West Midlands special branch has known since 1975 (a few months after the six were convicted) the identity of every one of the gang who planted the bombs in Birmingham. The names were spelled out in a 1975 special branch report which was well publicised by Granada Television. All the suspects are now safely in Ireland. Not one of the Birmingham Six was in the gang or had anything to do with it.

The *Sunday Torygraph*'s triumph was at once shared by almost all the other papers, which printed the police "information" that further investigations into the Maguire family, all of whom were wrongly convicted for harbouring bombs and sent down for sentences ranging from 14 years, suggested that they too, though now released, had been rightly convicted. Once again there was not a shred of fact to justify the smear, but the papers published it enthusiastically.

While smearing people released by the court of appeal, the police "dirty tricks" brigade is also turning its attention to the large number of cases still awaiting leave to appeal.

One of the biggest such cases still before the home secretary is the Carl Bridgewater murder case, in which three men were convicted in 1979 of the murder of a newspaper boy. The case has already been flung out after referral to the appeal court, but now there is new language evidence about the "confession statement" which set the police on the track of their suspects.

The new evidence was sent by the home secretary to Staffordshire police, who passed it on to Merseyside police, who took a year to examine it. On 18 September Neil Bennet, the BBC home affairs correspondent, was judiciously leaked (through a "neutral" Manchester copper) the news that the Merseyside secret police inquiry had rubbished the new evidence and concluded there was nothing wrong with the Bridgewater convictions.

Thus in the space of nine days three separate leaks had smeared the Birmingham Six, the Maguires and the Bridgewater Three. But the police have a lot more smearing to do before the current batch of injustice cases can be forgotten. Two other cases sit on Clarke's desk demanding urgent attention.

One is the M50 murder for which Edward Browning was convicted in 1989. As the *Eye* has revealed, this case was a triumph for the former head of West Mercia CID, Det Chief Supt David Cole, and his old comrade-in-arms, the forensic scientist Dr Peter Acland. Somehow Cole and Acland concluded that Browning could have knifed to death a woman in his car without allowing any blood to be spilled. This astonishing feat was doubted by other scientists at the time, and there is now a lot of new evidence which shows the conviction for the nonsense it was.

Clarke, it is thought, will not be able to dodge this one. And he also has some difficulty with the case of the Cardiff Three, all of whom are very obviously not guilty of murdering Lynette White, a Cardiff prostitute, as they were charged and convicted.

One of the three, Tony Paris, is likely to be released from prison very soon. The hot news from the director of public prosecutions' office is that the tenuous case against him is on the verge of collapse.

In jailing Paris the only corroborative evidence came from an unreliable armed robber-turned-supergrass, Ian Massey. He was jailed for 14 years for a robbery in South Wales in the mid-80s, but after turning supergrass Knacker went to appeal to try to have his sentence reduced. After the appeal failed, Massey was moved to Cardiff jail, alongside Paris, who was on remand. Paris allegedly confessed his part in the White murder to Massey who, interestingly enough, revealed details of the killing only the murderer — or a well informed third party such as Dai Knacker — could have known.

Once Massey's statements against notorious ex-Manchester cop Ged Corley (*Eyes passim*) had been shown to be false, his claims concerning Paris no longer looked reliable. The problem for Kenneth Clarke is that any rigorous examination of the Cardiff case might lay South Wales police open to the same sort of ridicule they suffered after the fiasco of the Darvell brothers in Swansea, conceivably the most blatant frame-up of them all.

Meanwhile the leakers and smearers in the police are delighted by Clarke's "no" over Derek Bentley. They are especially pleased by the way he skated over the fact that Bentley was under arrest at the time of the shooting; and that the bullet that killed the policeman probably came from the gun of another policeman shooting at Bentley's accomplice. This sort of crude refusal to examine even the evidence in books about the case delights detectives everywhere.

But they should not rejoice too soon. There are those who say the wily Clarke, appalled by the volume of injustice cases demanding his attention, decided to lead off by "giving away" the Bentley case, where the wrongly-convicted man is dead, to make it easier for him to refer the other three — Bridgewater, Browning and Cardiff, where the defendants are mostly alive — to the court of appeal.

Decisions on all three are expected soon — though not perhaps before Clarke goes to the treasury to replace the sacked Norma Lamont.

## BENTLEY PARDON REFUSED

RIPPER YARNS

# PE and Mrs Jones

**THE unpleasantly graphic serialisation in the *News of the World* of Barbara Jones's book on the Yorkshire Ripper is curious for many reasons.**

First there is the rocky relationship Jones has had with the Murdoch rag since she "befriended" the Ripper's wife. But even more curious are the omissions about those — including Jones and certain *Screws* executives — who knew more than they ever cared to reveal publicly about the perjury of Sonia Sutcliffe.

As revealed in *Eye* 802, Jones's tome is to be published — following several rejections — by John Blake of Blake Hardbacks. That Jones should get into bed with the *Screws* in a serialisation deal is ironic. For readers will recall that when Sonia Sutcliffe sued the *News of the World* for libel — and lost — it was over a story prepared by Jones following her famous holiday with Sutcliffe in Greece.

As the trial approached, the *Screws* became far from happy with the lack of candour Mrs Jones was displaying and — most uncharitably — attached her name to its own writ. This generated a lot of anger and Mrs Jones was forced into court alongside the *News of the World* to defend herself. Evidently any rancour caused by such unpleasantness has been shortlived.

One of the more interesting episodes to which *Screws* readers will not be privy concerns the attempts by newspapers — particularly the *Screws* — to buy up the Ripper story from Sonia Sutcliffe shortly after Peter Sutcliffe's arrest.

Several rags made bids, including the *News of the World*, which was then edited by Barry Askew. Askew and Stuart Kuttner, the latter then features editor, now managing editor of the *Screws*, approached Mrs Sutcliffe and a sort of deal was struck. Mrs Sutcliffe *was* of course paid by *News of the World*, but at the time her epic legal action against *Private Eye* she claimed it was only piddling amounts for expenses which were paid to her sister.

The *Eye* defended its earlier story that Mrs Sutcliffe had been paid substantial amounts for her cooperation, but our pre-trial discovery was inadequate and the *News of the World* exhibited a remarkable lack of candour, which at that time we failed to understand.

During the bidding war for the Sutcliffe memoirs, the mother of one of the Ripper's victims wrote to the queen expressing concern at the newspapers' chequebook tactics. The palace's immediate condemnation of such tactics caused Rupert Murdoch to forbid his Sunday rag paying Sonia Sutcliffe anything at all.

However, when the *Screws* and Barbara Jones later fought off the Sonia Sutcliffe writ, it emerged that Sonia had been touted around New York publishers by Stuart Kuttner, her airfare and accommodation paid for by the Murdoch paper.

But there is even more to it than that — as the former *News of the World* editor Barry Askew well knows.

When Sonia Sutcliffe won her damages of £600,000 from the *Eye*, which were overturned on appeal, we undertook our own inquiries into chequebook journalism and in doing so interviewed Askew at the Crest Hotel in Preston.

Askew told the *Eye* he could provide us with information that would sink Sonia Sutcliffe as he could prove that she had been paid. All he wanted, he said, was 10 percent of the damages as a success fee, which would have been some £60,000, with 10 percent of that figure paid up front and in cash. The *Eye* would not deal with Askew.

In the course of preparing her book, Barbara Jones also spoke with Askew. She has some regard for him, having worked under him some years ago on the *Lancashire Evening Post*, and she clearly got from Askew what the *Eye* refused to pay for — the inside information on the *News of the World* payments to Sonia Sutcliffe.

In the affidavit held by John Blake, Askew says that on his instructions Stuart Kuttner paid Sonia Sutcliffe £12,000 and that this payment was in contradiction of Rupert Murdoch's instructions and was in effect kept secret from the jury at the *Screws'*

Barbara Jones

Barry Askew

own trial. It goes without saying that had this simple truth been made available to the *Eye*, we would not have had the trouble we did with the perjuring Mrs Sutcliffe.

When the director of public prosecutions previously interviewed Barbara Jones in this connection, she declined to give the DPP a statement. But now she is desperate to see her book published and has offered the *Eye* a deal. Through her solicitors, Jones has suggested that if the *Eye* agrees to lay off her, she will provide the magazine with the evidence to have Mrs Sutcliffe charged with perjury. Knowing Barbara Jones as we do, this condition may prove a trifle challenging.

Meanwhile the grotesque Dial-a-Ripper plan — the *News of the World* intended to set up lines for callers to hear the spoken word of a mass murderer — has been shelved. Following the *Sun*'s failed "Squidgy" tape, Dial-a-Ripper has been deemed too disgusting even for the *Screws*/Jones partnership.

NHS TRUSTS

# Chapman and worse

**THE FIRST annual meeting of the United Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust was not the back-slapping affair its bosses had hoped for.**

Despite their tactics of limiting publicity and packing the meeting with middle management, the get-together was dominated by hostile questioning over the sacking of whistle-blowing Dr Chris Chapman from the trust's Leeds general infirmary (see *Eyes passim*).

Chief executive Stuart Ingham resisted calls to resign over his oft-repeated claim that an inquiry into Chapman's allegations of fraud and malpractice had been carried out independently by Coopers & Lybrand, the accountants who audited Cap'n Bob's books so convincingly.

It transpired that although an employee of Coopers had sat on the team which carried out the inquiry, it was actually an internal inquiry under the supervision of the then health authority (chief executive: Stuart Ingham). Defending his £90,000-a-year chief, trust chairman and millionaire Tory businessman Tony Clegg said it was simply "a question of semantics".

Also attempting to wash their hands of the Chapman affair are the worthies who run the Yorkshire Cancer Research Campaign. The campaign funds the prestigious post of chair of experimental cancer research at St James' Hospital in Leeds — filled for the past 12 months by Professor John Whicher. That is the same Professor Whicher who is currently being investigated at Leeds university for failing to deal properly with Dr Chapman's fraud allegations, and who first proposed the redundancy of Dr Chapman three years ago.

The charity says it is not interested in such matters because it just raises money to fund research and hands it over to the county's universities to control. Obviously a very responsible and proper attitude for an organisation that depends on the goodwill and generosity of the public. After all, if people thought their money might go to anybody who had been involved in any way in a fraud investigation, they might not be so generous.

ELECTRICITY

# A fuel rod for the Government's back

**IS THERE any future for independent electricity producers in the privatised energy paradise that is the United Kingdom? That is the pointed question Michael Spicer, Tory MP for Worcestershire South, has put forcefully to his successor as energy minister.**

Spicer was in charge of renewable energy from 1987 to 1990 and is now chairman of the environmentally-friendly Association of Independent Electricity Producers — the people who thought they were going to come into their own once electricity was privatised. Instead, most have been kicking their heels in despair as the Government wriggles out of its obligations to them and favours instead National Power and PowerGen, the old CEGB in all but name.

Spicer's chief executive, David Porter, has written on behalf of the independents to Tim Eggar, energy minister, reminding him that the Government promised to provide higher-than-normal payments for non-fossil fuels. The amount has been fixed at £1.2 billion, and 98 percent of this has gone to Nuclear Electric to enable it to survive. The tiny remnant has been allocated for such projects as wind farms.

In autumn 1990 the subsidy underwrote 102 megawatts of generating capacity. The following autumn the energy department amazed its critics by giving them twice as much money as expected — permission for 457 megawatts of new generators. Friends of the Earth was breathless: "FoE celebrates a campaign victory as the Government announces a significant increase in the support offered to renewable energy projects," it said.

But that was in the halcyon days before a general election when John Wakeham, the then energy secretary, had to appease (and silence) environmentalists or anyone else who cared about pollution and the burning-up of finite resources. There should have been a third announcement this autumn, but with no election on the horizon the Government has no need to pretend to be on the side of the angels.

As the AIEP says in its letter to Eggar: "There are rumours that you were not planning to make any further announcement until the spring of 1993. I cannot emphasise too strongly the difficulties that delay and uncertainty are causing in the industry — companies are jobs are at risk."

A spokesman for the trade and industry department (which swallowed energy) said it was waiting for the long-delayed report of its own renewable energy advisory group (see ANOTHER SOLAR ECLIPSE in the last *Eye*) and also for permission from the European Commission to extend the length of time subsidies can be paid. The EC has sanctioned the subsidies only until 1998, which is too short a period for independent investors to recoup their outlay. The AIEP notes that other EC states have been allowed subsidies for longer; and the word from Brussels has been that it would not object to Britain extending the time over which subsidies can be paid if the Government so wants. But Government is in at least two minds. Not only does it dislike paying money for anything, but it is under heavy pressure from big business to reduce the subsidy which adds 11 percent to everyone's electricity bills.

Under privatisation legislation, the Government was supposed to *reduce* payments to the nuclear industry as it became more profitable (ho, ho) and pay the money to the developers of clean, new renewable sources of energy. This is not what the big users want. They want the subsidy ended altogether; and the Government does not want to have to tell such people as ICI and the Major Energy Users Council, to which ICI belongs, that its members are going to have to pay a surcharge on electricity bills for ever — all in pursuit of government policy to encourage diversity of sources and keep pollution within international limits.

The treasury strongly opposes a reduction in the subsidy because it knows nuclear power is never going to be viable and that it is stuck with the need to make the payments. It would rather the money came out of the nation's electricity bills than from taxes.

In the middle of this confusion another battle is about to erupt: Coffer v Offer. Coffer (the Coalition for Fair Electricity Regulation) represents large electricity users, including local authorities and big companies and the Coalfields Communities Campaign, and it intends to take Offer, the electricity regulator, to court because it is encouraging the use of new gas-fired power stations which are more expensive than older coal-fired stations. The industry is required by law to buy the cheapest electricity and, says Coffer, is thus in breach of privatisation legislation.

John Wakeham, who privatised electricity and is now safely installed in the Lords, must be congratulating himself on being well out of the chaos he created.

CHANNEL TUNNEL

# A freightful mess

**AS EUROTUNNEL enters its final lap with shareholders wondering how many years they must live to get their money back, the commercial director of Le Shuttle has set off a small timebomb.**

Christopher Garnett casually announced in Folkestone that it will cost more for freight hauliers to use the tunnel than use existing ferries. This is a quiet way of saying that the big argument in favour of the tunnel — that it will boost trade between the UK and the continent and make a fortune for itself from the freight trade — is largely spurious.

Garnett told the *Eye* that Le Shuttle was offering "a premium service" that would save time. He said more and more hauliers were concentrating on the Dover-Calais route because it was faster "and therefore better value for the operator. We provide even greater frequency and speed."

This, according to City sources who have been watching the tunnel's progress with growing distress, is a complete misunderstanding of the hauliers' point of view.

"It has been demonstrated over and over again in the cross-Channel market that price is the most important factor," one expert said. "In addition, the employers and their drivers have been taking advantage of the Channel crossing for the legally-obligatory rest period and the longer sea crossing suits them. The ferry can be used as a clocking-off period so far as the tachograph is concerned."

Much freight therefore goes to Zeebrugge, which also has the advantage of taking the lorries straight on to the continental motorway system. "Other increasingly popular routes are the overnighters from Southampton and Poole to Cherbourg."

The manager of the Road Haulage Association, Rod Jenkins, confirmed this. "If a driver is coming down from, say, Glasgow and has used almost all his daily driving limit, he can then have his daily rest of nine hours on the ship and get a good night's sleep," he said. "In many cases it is not an advantage commercially to go on a short crossing."

Freight has always been seen as the basic income of the tunnel. The number of private passengers peaks in the holiday periods, but freight, it was hoped, would provide a continuous flow of business.

So does the talk of higher prices indicate that Eurotunnel is in serious financial trouble in the long term? One City source said: "They are facing the problem of diminishing returns. If you go beyond a certain level with pricing, you won't get the volume of business you expect which means that you have to go in higher up on the pricing to get the revenue, which means you get even less volume. There is a danger that that will happen. At the end of the day, Eurotunnel's only real option to get volume through is to cut prices for both passengers and freight."

That will mean an even longer delay before the tunnel repays interest on its capital investment and begins to reduce its debt and offer something to shareholders. The cost of the tunnel is now around £8.5 billion and one expert believes the final figure will be around £11 billion. With such a debt to settle at high interest rates, the tunnel is looking increasingly like the debt-ridden Humber Bridge — a project whose income is always less than its outgoings in interest payments.

EURO TUNNEL

# In the City

APTLY-NAMED Jim Raper made one of the greatest contributions to giving City self-regulation a bad name.

Tagged by the Takeover Panel in 1980 with the Maxwell label of "unfit to be the director of a public company" because of his "deplorable" and "flagrant" breaches of the City Code, Raper was allowed back three years later by the Stock Exchange. Within two years he had wiped out shareholders and cost banks and other creditors £15 million.

Star of not one but *two* DTI investigations, Raper is today a fugitive from a two-year prison sentence for contempt of court after spiriting away assets claimed by the collapsed Savings & Investment Bank, which he helped bring down.

All the more remarkable, therefore, that a veteran Raper associate who played a key role in the events which spawned the panel and DTI condemnations should be allowed to return as chairman of a listed company — with the approval of the Stock Exchange and Takeover Panel made fools of by Jim Raper.

Malcolm Stone has become chairman of the small and sinking Embassy Property Group as part of a rescue package. Stone, and the three Tai Wong brothers from Hong Kong, have taken control of Embassy in return for injecting £2.8 million. Stone, a Thai national resident in Thailand, is now the £75,000-a-year chairman with a personal stake of some 9 percent and control of Embassy's finances. A Stone-controlled company has already been paid £50,000 for making a four-month unsecured loan of £200,000 to Embassy.

The August circular to shareholders detailing the rescue package devotes one sparse paragraph to Stone and the DTI. All Embassy shareholders learn is that he was "not the subject of criticism". But that is so far from the whole story as to be worthy of a prize for disinformation. For starters, Stone was involved in not one DTI investigation — into the Raper holding company St Piran, where he was chairman, as the circular states — but two. It ignores the DTI investigation into Milbury, although mentioning that Stone became Milbury's chairman. But then not only does it not mention what happened to the housebuilders — shareholders lost everything — but it fails even to mention Raper at all! That one omission proves what a snow job has been pulled on Embassy shareholders with the approval of the same sleep-walking regulators who allowed Stone's controller a second rip-off.

So let us now praise infamous men and go where the Stock Exchange, the Takeover Panel and Embassy's advisers (merchant bankers J.S. Gadd, brokers Neilson Cobbold and Peel Hunt and solicitors Gouldens) are determined no shareholder shall be taken — back to Stone's role in the life and times of Jim Raper.

Malcolm Stone — or Visit Seraprin, his official Thai name; Stone is now effectively an alias — first joined the Raper crew in 1972 when he became managing director of Faber Merlin (Thailand) which Raper ran via Faber Merlin (Hong Kong). FMT almost collapsed and Stone resigned in 1975. FMT's new owners contemplated legal action for mismanagement, accepting undisclosed commissions and entering into contracts prejudicial to the company. Stone denied the allegations.

In 1977 Stone reemerged as a director of Berriedale Investments, a Hong Kong company controlled by the serial corporate Rapist. One of his co-directors was an executive with the CIA-linked Nugan Hand banking/money laundering group.

Between 1977 and 1984 Stone was managing director of the Berriedale-controlled Gasco Investments, a key Raper vehicle in Hong Kong, and director and then chairman of St Piran and Milbury-companies controlled up front or behind the scenes by Raper, who after the panel's indictment in 1980 was blacklisted by the Stock Exchange.

The DTI inspectors of St Piran determined that from 1978 the board "acted in accordance with advice given by Raper, whenever tendered, and ratified transactions entered into by Raper on behalf of St Piran without prior authority, whenever proposed". After becoming chairman Stone was the sole executive director. Raper's role in St Piran was described as "extensive" although officially he was merely an adviser. "We believe it is impossible to treat the board as independent of Raper," the DTI declared.

The inspectors said Stone faced "potentially a most severe conflict of interest" because of his roles at St Piran and Gasco. They doubted whether he would act for the benefit of St Piran rather than his paymaster. Stone told the inspectors the conflict was "mostly theoretical", that he was not directed by Raper, held no personal brief for him and would not bend to pressure from him. The inspectors' verdict damned Stone with faint praise: "We record this, but our doubts remain." So much for not being the subject of criticism.

Five years after that 1981 report the DTI launched its probe into Milbury. Published in 1988, the Milbury report detailed how Stone with Raper negotiated the agreement with the Stock Exchange and the Takeover Panel which allowed Raper back in 1983. Stone initiated the talks. Raper admitted he had Stone to thank for the "regulation in our time" settlement. As part of that deal Raper apologised for his past behaviour in secretly obtaining control of St Piran (described by the panel as the worst rule breach it had ever encountered) and with Stone agreed to "scrupulously observe" the City Code.

Within weeks Raper demanded that Stone resign as executive chairman of Milbury to allow him to take over. Stone agreed. This crucial boardroom change in November 1983 — Raper was supposed to be a non-executive director — was hidden from the Stock Exchange and shareholders for seven weeks. Stone stayed silent over what had happened even when a false and misleading interim statement was issued the next month to Milbury shareholders under his name as chairman, saying Raper would not take over until January 1984.

Despite a supposed row with Raper, Stone remained on the board of Gasco until April 1984.

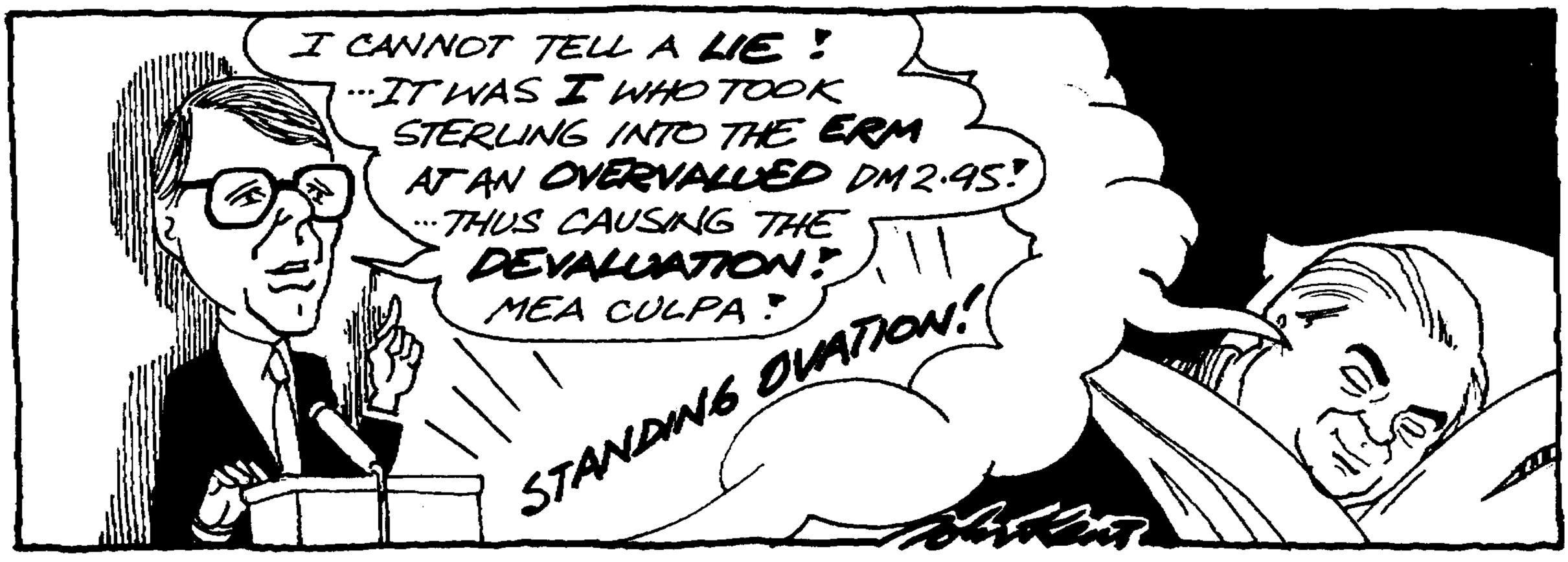
Second time around the DTI concluded that Raper was "a dominating and unscrupulous man, whose activities were inadequately controlled". They recommended he should never be permitted to be a director of a public company again.

It is impossible to see how Raper's stooge Malcolm Stone, who did his bidding, facilitated his comeback and stayed silent in breach of his supposed commitment to obey the City rules can pass the "fit and proper" test of a director. Once again the Stock Exchange and the Takeover Panel are asleep at the wheel. Three Wongs do not make Stone right.

**SO FAREWELL then Philip Green of Amber Day, forced out by the institutional shareholders and mourned only by his faithful *Sunday Times* Boswell, Jeff Randall. The well-missed profits forecast was blamed by the financial hacks. Green knows the truth. He blames *Private Eye* (unmentioned by any paper, even those that mimicked *Eye* revelations as their own) and its disclosures about his business activities and too tasty associates, loan shark Tony Schneider and busted leasing boss Ted Ball. But how final is the farewell? There are rumours, no doubt untrue, that Green was paid £1 million to leave, still kept the Bentley and chauffeur and has a new contract as "consultant buyer". Perhaps the shareholders should be told?**

IT LOOKS like fourth time unlucky for Clarke Foods' Henry Clarke. The fast-melting American ice cream king's shares were suspended at 8p down this year from 160p pending a lifesaving cash injection. Clarke's first US public company housebuilder National Environment lost millions and went into bankruptcy soon after firing him in 1970. Three years later Topper (president H. Clarke) went the same route. In 1989 Clarke was forced out of Clabir, home of his first ice cream venture, after loading the company with debts of $300 million for poor acquisitions, generating multimillion losses, driving the shares from $14 to $1 and earning the title of one of America's worst run businesses. All while paying himself huge salaries, bonuses and perks. The only surprise is Clarke Foods lasted so long.

***'Slicker'***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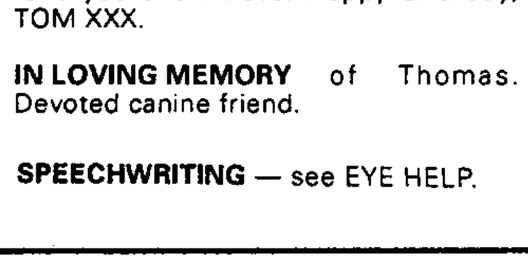


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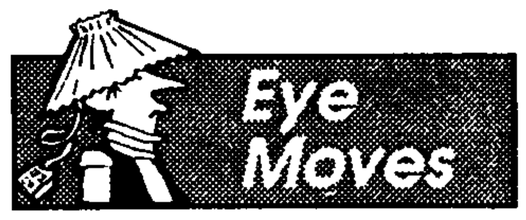


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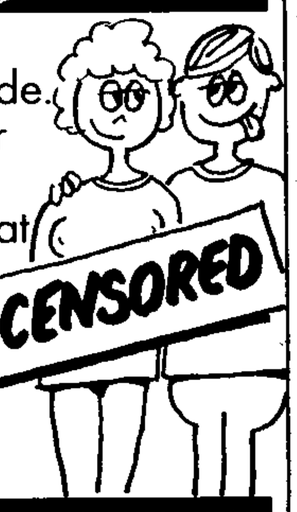

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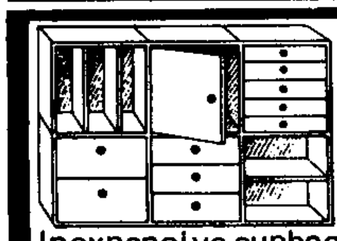
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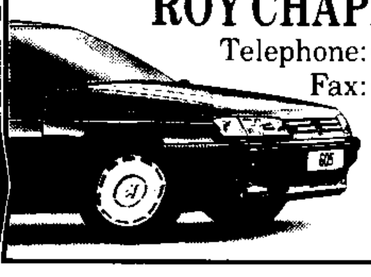

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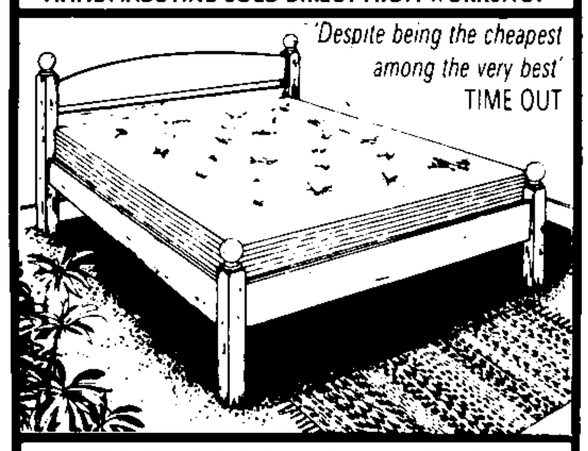


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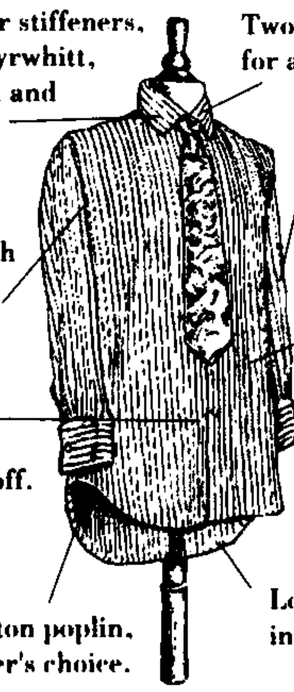
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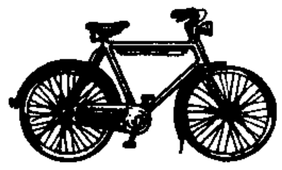

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